world FILM news

HOMAGE TO GARBO

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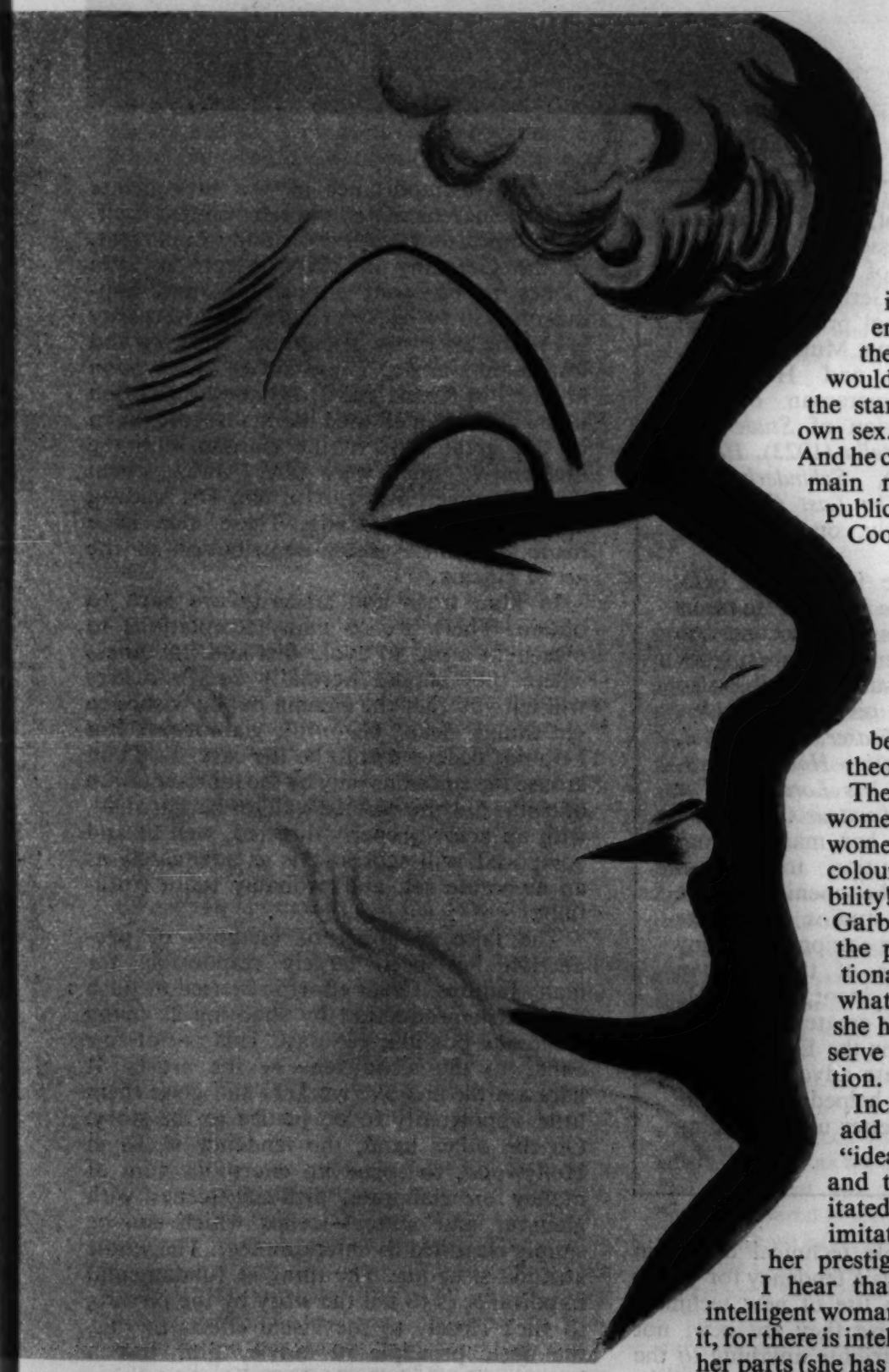
HOMAGE TO GARBO

(First of a series in which famous stars and directors will reveal unexpected loyalties)

By ALBERTO CAVALCANTI



SOTÉRO

SOME sitting-room theorist made, on sex-appeal, an unexpected but quite true remark: "Actors on the screen, despite the darkness of cinema-halls, don't have direct appeal to the sexual instincts of the audience: they only touch their imagination. This would explain why most of the stars' 'fans' are of their own sex."

And he concluded subtly: "The main reason why the male public rushes to see Gary Cooper is because he represents, on the screen, what they would like to be in life. He is the average male audience ideal."

Miss Garbo would have been an even better example of this theory.

The ideal of millions of women all over the globe, women of all races and colours, what a responsibility! Yet, somehow, Miss Garbo has managed to hold the position for an exceptionally long time. And, what is more, while doing it she has never ceased to deserve our greatest admiration.

Incidentally, one could add that she is also the "ideal" of many other stars, and that is why she is imitated so often. None of her imitators have ever attained her prestige and—her greatness.

I hear that Miss Garbo is an intelligent woman, and I can well believe it, for there is intelligence in the choice of her parts (she has played characters from Dumas, Maugham, O'Neil, Pirandello, Tolstoi); just as much intelligence as in the choice of her directors (Stiller, Pabst, Feyder, Brown, Mamoulian, etc.).

But her intelligence does not alone account for her greatness.

The Swedish actress has always remained a "foreigner" in Hollywood. She is born to film in her own country. Swedish films had a sort of sensitiveness and restraint that have since been lost to films. These are Miss Garbo's own main qualities.

Besides, Swedish films were ever the only "romantic" films, and this is very important in Miss Garbo's biography.

Although publicity departments tried to present Greta Garbo as a "mysterious woman," she is nothing else but a professional actress, and a good actress, too. Just as much as La Duse, or Réjane, or even their illustrious ancestor, Rachel.

Like them she doesn't need to show her legs. Like them she doesn't need to play girlish parts or appear insistently as a little boy.

We are thankful to her for being a dancer, in *Grand Hotel*, without dancing, and for sparing us quite a few sentimental songs in her films. We are thankful to her for this ability to avoid hysterics in her big scenes and for quietly giving us the impression that, somehow, she never empties completely her reserves of emotion.

Yes, however sorry the said publicity departments might be, nobody believes in Greta Garbo's mystery; she succeeds nevertheless in maintaining round her an atmosphere of unreality, because she is a "romantic" actress, and being intelligent she knows it.

This consciousness of being a "foreigner" and "romantic" accounts for the durability and the quality of her success—as much as the sensible choice of her parts and of her directors, and as much again as the perfection of her craftsmanship.

The whole is so gracefully put together, and so highly feminine that, considering the instability and the diversity of elements used in film-making, every one of her appearances could have destroyed it. But at least since *Queen Christina*, the delicate structure has proved to be of considerable solidity as well.

Homage to Garbo. In the film world, so full of faked values, she deserves all praise and respect.

THE CURSE OF DIALOGUE

By Gunther Krampf

Master of Light

IN THE BRITISH studios more consideration is given to dialogue than to any other aspect of film-making. To my mind dialogue is relatively unimportant. If I want to hear good dialogue, I can turn on the radio.

This emphasis on dialogue contradicts the basic principle of film, which must always be the communication of emotion through the eyes by pictorial effect. The three components, pictorial effect, acting, and dialogue, should be well-balanced in the good picture, otherwise the effect will approximate a photographed stage-play. A film story should be written especially for the screen.

The adaptation of a stage-play is unlikely to succeed, as dialogue is almost bound to receive undue emphasis at the expense of the visuals. The picture will become slow and heavy. In other arts the same principle is true. Music written for the organ cannot be played successfully by the violin. Every art has its own technique, its own media of expression.

In the good days of the German film, 1919–25, the primary consideration of first-class men like Lang, Pommer and Pabst was always this. The cameraman in Germany was the king of the studio. He worked closely with the director on the preparation for a film and his job was to convey the true meaning of the story through the camera and the camera only. It was the director's job to co-ordinate the work of the artists and technicians and to direct the acting. The rest was in the hands of the cameraman.

British producers do not give this power to their cameramen. Camera-work has become largely a cut and dried affair. Effects and even minor matters of exposure and focusing are often decided for him. He is allowed little latitude and little scope for expressing his conception of the story's meaning.

In my opinion, film-makers have, in general, an incomplete understanding of the true art of the film. To me it is very clear. The story must be told by the picture and the atmosphere with which the cameraman has succeeded in investing it. His art is to employ every available technical device in the right place. There is a tendency for young directors to insist on use of new technical methods simply because they are new, not because they will contribute anything to the inner meaning and spirit of the story. In film there is a particular danger of reversing the relative importance of the instruments of the achievement and the achievement itself.

Technical devices are certainly important. In the Germany of 1920, there was little money to be spent on pictures, and film-makers had to be very ingenious. Necessity led to the discovery of panning, trucking and low camera-angle. These devices were soon imitated in Russia and Hollywood, but often unimaginative men used them absurdly. Even in the great days of the German film the imaginative men were few. Among them Erich Pommer, Pabst, Murnau, Dr. Ludwig Berger, and Fritz Lang. These men have made an immeasurable contribution to the art of cinema.

In film, truth and sincerity are hard to obtain. There are so many temptations to over-light a set, to avoid dirt and untidiness where they should normally be. Producers will tell you that the cinema public wishes to see things clean, beautiful, glamorous. But I do not believe this to be the case. You can arouse the emotions only by the representation of truth. A white-washed wall for background, with an actor properly directed, well lit and composed, will express this as adequately as an elaborate set, and probably more truthfully.

The false economy of methods of production has been largely responsible for many failures. Great effort is exerted to push forward a production by shooting as many scenes as possible per day. This is not fair either to the technicians or the artists. It harasses the creative workers and gives them little opportunity to do justice to the story. On the other hand, the tendency is, as in Hollywood, to spend an enormous sum of money on elaborate, artificial scenes with glamour and glitter—scenes which can be simply classified as entertainment. The whole attitude is wrong. The thing of fundamental importance is to tell the story by the picture, to stick closely to the visual effect. In this, the basic principle of movie, film has a language in which to speak to all nationalities. In this, it is an art.

Gunther Krampf, the Austrian cameraman, was associated with some of the best work of the famous pre-Nazi school of German cinematography. This school produced Erich Pommer, Fritz Lang, Murnau, Pabst, Berger, Wagner, and Hoffmann. Krampf was cameraman on the famous 1926 version of *Student of Prague*, on *Cinderella* (1923), *Hands of Orlac* (1924), *Schinderhannes*, *Pandora's Box*, *The Last Company*, and, more recently, on *The Maid Johanna*.

To England he introduced back projection in *Rome Express*. He ranks the pictorial effects of the second-rate film *The Bells* as among the best work he has done. He was responsible also for camera-work on *The Outsider*, *The First Mrs. Fraser*, *The Ghoul*, *Death at Broadcasting House*, *Everything is Thunder*, *His Lordship*, *The Tunnel*, and *The Amateur Gentleman*. Gunther Krampf has made a considerable contribution to English cinema, and on the opening of the Shepherd's Bush studios his advice was invited on the equipment. Many of the best ideas of the German studios were thus incorporated. He has done much to create a standard of photography for the English film, and as a passionate advocate of the art of cinema has helped the men he has trained to a better understanding of the medium.

EDITORIAL

Secrets of Film Finance

Last month's article on the "Secrets of British Film Finance" had a startling sequel. On the day of publication the intelligence department of one of the big banks sent round for a flattering number of copies. Within a week came the news that the banks had taken thought and that the policy of lavish credits was to be reconsidered. Fleet Street echoed the story and quoted solidly from our article in both news and financial columns—not always with acknowledgment. A note of panic came into one of the trade papers. "Bad, very bad," it said, of the action of the banks, but acknowledged the salutary effect of a clean-up of film finance. Here and there an inspired newspaper column softened the blow to public confidence by talking of the fundamental difficulties of the British market and the necessity for speculation.

We are glad to have done this service. We stand, above all, for the interests of the creative worker and for good films; and good films are impossible when prbduction conditions are those of a lunatic asylum.

One result of our article was to confirm our distrust in the independence of some of the newspaper film columns. We know our film columnists pretty well, and good men they are, but in many quarters a gesture was cast to the advertisement section and we were told the story was "too dangerous." "Too dangerous," though everyone knew the Film Council had no other interest than to tell the story as objectively as possible, and though everyone knew it was true. It is a curious irony that the banks did not think it "too dangerous," and that Mr. Maxwell before the Moyne Committee was no less violent in his comment than our figures were violent in their fact.

We have one comment to make. So long as the film industry inhibits its journalists and frightens away honest criticism, it lays itself open to grave harms. The gold rush of British film finance has gone on unchecked and a noble opportunity has been wasted because Wardour Street neither told itself the truth nor allowed anyone else to tell it. We hope that one of the results of the current show-down will be a freer spirit of criticism.

Film Policy for Africa

AS WESTERN EDUCATION and the dissemination of Western civilisation by trade spreads over Africa, her native peoples are beginning to question its vaunted superiority, judging naturally by only what they actually see or hear of it. England and America are to them as far off as their strangeness as China and India were to Marco Polo or Vasco de Gama. Even if they come to the West for study or on business, it is too utterly different to be comprehended easily.

One Gold Coast African, who had been on a long tour of the British Isles as a band drummer, could on his return talk only of the "wonderful tower at Eastbourne"—a typically Marco Polo touch—and how the cars and traffic were "too much." He returned thankfully to his quiet village, reckoning its peace and freedom from worry as the greatest luxury he could imagine.

Yet while despising many of the manifestations of western civilisation Africans are fully aware of its power and potentialities as a weapon of strength. They are demanding more and more education and are striving to arm themselves with it so that they may be at least on equal terms with the white race.

In all this stirring of racial pride and tradition, together with the urge to acquire the knowledge and material benefits of the West, there lies grave danger to the white position in Africa. If clashes of brutality and bloodshed are to be avoided, the white Governments must somehow meet this hunger for Western knowledge and education in the wisest possible manner. Films of an educational and descriptive nature are the only means by which a real knowledge of life and conditions in the West can be obtained.

The trouble, in West Africa at any rate, is that Government has little revenue to spend on education, much less to inaugurate a film policy for the purpose. It would be worth finding the money somehow, if it would prevent this vague unrest and craving for knowledge of the world to-day from crystallising into deep hostility.

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* *The Film Council has published its first book. The full report from which last month's story of film finance was taken was issued on January 18th, as "Money Behind the Screen" (Lawrence and Wishart, 5s.). It appears over the names of Dr. F. D. Klingender and Stuart Legg with an introduction on behalf of the Film Council by John Grierson.*

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Zéro de Conduite

To the Editor,

World Film News.

We hope you will not forget in your "Review of Reviews" an interesting example of criticism in relation to *Zéro de Conduite* (*Nought for Behaviour*), the Jean Vigo film now running at the Everyman, Hampstead. The comments of Mr. Ian Coster of the *Evening Standard* and Miss C. A. Lejeune of the *Observer* are so much alike that they have some appearance of being concerted. "Nought for direction. Nought for acting. Nought for story. Nought for continuity. Five for trying," says Miss Lejeune glibly, onetwothreefourfivesix justlikethat. Mr. Coster repeats the criticism, almost to the word.

It seems to us the silliest and most irresponsible criticism that has disgraced our film columns these many months. Others have taken a rap at *Zéro*, but with some regard for the pitfalls that beset the hasty and cocksure critic when an unusual style of art is concerned. Here we have the smart-alick in full and horrible cry.

We expect much from critics of such distinguished papers as the *Standard* and the *Observer* and much that was great and fine could have been discovered in *Zéro de Conduite*. We believe so because we have, quite simply, seen it; and not once but in the many times we have watched the film since it first appeared in Paris four years ago.

This perhaps is not the occasion to describe our own critical sense of the picture. *Zéro* will still be alive when some of the films which now secure the fervent attention of Miss Lejeune are as dead as mutton, and it will have ample opportunity to register among the classics of film expression. We only wish, before the occasion passes, to make our protest against a distempered and ugly critical performance. We are supported in this by correspondents in both England and Scotland who have asked us, some in anger and some in contempt, to express their disappointment.

Vigo is dead and he died young, tortured to the last by such criticism as we have now in evidence. Yet the promise of his imagination was greater than in anyone we have ever known in cinema. Images were the life of the man. He thought, wrote and shot in images, and except his films are seen in terms of this language of images—a true language for cinema as for poetry —they may certainly be difficult to understand.

But surely it is just this effort of understanding which is the privilege of criticism. When understanding fails, it is a pity; when the critic is insensitive to the harm of such failure, it is, shall we say, a breach of common decency. Time, we think, will show that Miss Lejeune and Mr. Coster have done an ill-service to both their papers and themselves. This is particularly unfortunate in the case of Miss Lejeune, for she was once a sympathetic and careful critic, and a host of readers throughout the country looked to her for guidance. It was a great opportunity which will not soon come again.

Alberto Cavalcanti
Maurice Jaubert
John Grierson

"Walls-Lynn Comedies go down well . . ."

CONFLICTING TASTES OF BRITISH FILM-GOERS

Q. 1. ARE WE GETTING THE RIGHT KIND OF FILMS?

Q. 2. DO BRITISH PRODUCERS AND OTHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FILM SUPPLY MAKE A CLOSE ENOUGH STUDY OF PUBLIC REACTION?

Q. 3. WHAT KIND OF FILMS DO WE WANT?

MIDDLE CLASS LIKES BRITISH FILMS

★

WORKING CLASS DOES NOT

★

FAMILY AUDIENCES LIKE ROMANCE

★

SCOTTISH FILM-GOERS FIND ENGLISH FILMS MORE FOREIGN THAN HOLLYWOOD'S

These questions were answered by some 66 exhibitors in a symposium on box-office appeal published in the special annual number of the *Daily Film Renter*. WORLD FILM NEWS has asked the Film Council to summarise their replies.

The 66 exhibitors mentioned above, represent all parts of the country, including industrial areas, south coast holiday resorts, cathedral towns and London suburbs.

The social types these exhibitors cater for come under three main general headings: "working class," "family patronage," and "middle class."

Working-Class Audiences

Question 1: *Are you getting the right kind of films for your audiences?*

The replies to this question given by the independents, as distinct from the major circuits, complain of a lack of choice, particularly as far as English films are concerned. Allowing for this, the exhibitors, while on the whole satisfied with the more vigorous American films (not necessarily the most expensively-produced ones), are practically unanimous in regarding the majority of British films as unsuitable for their audiences. British films, one Scottish exhibitor writes, should rather be called English films in a particularly parochial sense: they are more foreign to his audience than the products of Hollywood, over 6,000 miles away.

Again and again exhibitors of this category complain of the "old school tie" standards inherent in so many British films. They describe the "horse-laughs" with which the Oxford accents of supposed crooks are greeted and the impatience of their patrons with the well-worn "social drama" type of filmed stage show. Similarly, the lack of *action*, and the excess of superfluous dialogue are censored. A significant statement, which frequently occurs, is that English films are either too high-brow (in the Bloomsbury sense) or else too stupid for their audiences. As one exhibitor puts the former case: "I do not expect that the man in the street would readily exchange his seaside picture postcard for the latest piece of surrealism."

Films with tempo and action, stirring in their appeal, simple and straightforward in treatment and related to the lives of the people appear to be the type preferred in this group. Comedy and slapstick are also required. Romance and melodrama of the better type are popular, whereas history is almost universally condemned. In the-two-feature programmes the working-class audiences want two good films, not one luxury super and one quickie.

(It is very interesting to note that one exhibitor ranges Air and War films with history pictures as unpopular.)

Opinions differ about musicals. In some cases they are still popular, in others their interest seems to flag. This bears out American evidence.

In general, the habit of producers in flogging to death a certain type of film that once made a hit, is censored and variety of type is stated to be essential in maintaining the interest of audience. (This applies to all types of exhibitors.)

Question 2: *Do British producers and others responsible for your film supply make a close enough study of public reaction?*

As one would expect from the replies to the previous question, the majority of exhibitors in this group complain that the British producers in particular do not sufficiently study their type of audience.

Question 3: *What kind of films do you want?*

Two replies appear to be particularly significant. From Liverpool :—It is a great mistake to regard many so-called "high-class" films as unsuitable for working-class audiences. While they may like gangster films, they also greatly appreciate intelligent pictures, provided they have plenty of action, a probable story with a strong human element and a modern angle in the theme.

Another exhibitor from Loughborough who heads his contribution "Producers versus Public," stresses the difference in life and outlook of the level-headed, intelligent provincial worker who works hard and plays hard and of the sedentary London worker. He wants films that are not only British in cost, but also British in character, that breathe the spirit of life in our land as we know it. He asks producers to study the lives of the people at home and in their workshops and mines and then to make films.

Mixed "Family" Audiences

Questions 1 *and* 2*:*

Opinions about the suitability of the film supply are not so negative as those of the working-class group of exhibitors. British output is nearer the tastes of this audience, although opinions do differ.

Question 3: *What kind of films?*

"Love, life and laughter with serious interludes, touch their heart strings, simple stories with family appeal." These are the verdicts. Light comedy; a simple blending of pathos and humour; romantic films with a sensible story; "not too true life," though dealing with people like themselves whose lives they can understand and whose reactions they can appreciate. A happy ending is demanded.

One exhibitor describes the "shop girl falls in love with the titled person" type of Cinderella story as particularly popular. The Walls-Lynn comedies go down well, although in one case, exception was taken to "swear-words, doubtful jokes and salacious situations" as being unsuitable for family halls. The same writer also dislikes actors who speak with a foreign accent.

People in this group want "something they need not think about, something that will catch the eye, tickle their fancy but not trouble their mind." Star value is stated to be particularly important. American films with British actors are most popular, while British films with what are described as "second-rate stars imported from Hollywood" are depreciated. Although high-brow stuff is disliked an occasional history film may make a hit. A Scottish exhibitor was surprised by the success of *Tudor Rose* and *Rhodes of Africa*. Open air films are liked.

Middle-Class Audiences

Questions 1 *and* 2*: Are you getting the right kind of films for your audiences?*

Do British producers and others responsible for your film supply make a close enough study of public reaction?

Satisfaction, particularly with the British supply is much more general in this category. British pictures are stated to be improving and are in some cases the type most in demand (especially in places like Bournemouth, Dorking, the Isle of Wight, etc.).

Question 3*: What kind of films do you want?*

"Good clean comedy and society drama with interesting dialogue, something people can think about and discuss afterwards" seems to sum up the most frequent attitude as to what is wanted. The Gaumont (Matthews-Hitchcock) and Wilcox (Anna Neagle) type of British film seems to go down particularly well. History is often stated to be popular, as are mystery films. American gangster, crime or police films are frowned upon. In the highbrow line popularity seems sometimes, though not un-equivocally, to extend as far as *Things to Come*, while Bergner, on the other hand, appears definitely to be welcome.

As in the former group, star value is stressed, and opinions differ as to whether a single star or a team is the better policy. English actors and background are favoured even in American films, *Mutiny on the Bounty* being cited as a case in point.

General Trends

In this summary we have attempted to select as impartially as possible from a vast mass of opinions what appear to be the distinguishing trends reported for each type of audience specified. These types frequently overlap and are not always clearly distinguished in the replies (although it is significant how often the social type of audience is indicated).

It is equally true that there are many elements of appeal that tend to be demanded by all types of audiences, and that next to and to some extent over-riding the variations in the tastes of different social groups there is a general trend in the taste of our period and in the film style able to satisfy that trend. This is borne out in a particularly interesting manner by the statements of two executives of American renting organisations in England.

Mr. Friedman of Columbia, describing the tendencies of the past year and the policy of his firm for the coming one, claims that next to realism, and even exceeding it in box-office appeal, the "happiness" picture is the most significant and progressive type to-day. By that he means the picture embodying the personal quest for happiness in the reality of our everyday existence, as initiated by Columbia with *It Happened One Night* and developed in such films as *If You Could Only Cook*, *Deeds*, etc. Similarly, Mr. Milder describes the policy of Warner Brothers as one of concentration on front page news value. And he explains this statement by describing the alliance between the newspaper and the film as a dual one: its first aspect is essentially realistic, the event of the day. The occurrence of front page actuality is at the same time the most striking film topic (especially if the release of the latter can be synchronised with the actual occurrence of the event, as was the case with *Boulder Dam* or *China Clipper*. Its second aspect is that, illustrated by *Green Pastures*, in which a film itself becomes front page news owing to its special treatment and quality.

Detailed Survey Needed

Every one concerned with the success of the film industry in satisfying the ever-changing demands of the box office must welcome collective statements of so frank a nature as those presented in this symposium. At the same time the complexity of the problem, the lack of agreed standards of classification, other than the most vague ones, the hopelessness of approaching the task in terms of "types" of films, instead of in terms of specific points of appeal that may be expressed in many different types—all these difficulties call for a systematic, scientific analysis of the whole problem of box-office.

Box-Office Enquiry

To collect and utilise the invaluable audience knowledge of the exhibitor throughout the country; to provide a really sound social classification of audience types, not neglecting the important regional differences; to study the films that appeal to each type and to provide a simple statement of the basic points of appeal that made these pictures popular in their respective audience group—that is the aim of the Box-Office Enquiry which the Film Council have selected as their next task and for which they hope to obtain the whole-hearted collaboration of as many exhibitors as possible.

"Scottish Exhibitor was surprised by the success of Tudor Rose"

"The Scarlet Pimpernel"—a crowd scene.

KINGS... FOR A DAY

WOULD-BE ACTORS AND ACTRESSES—THE WORLD IS FULL OF THEM. IN THIS VERY HUMAN STORY DOROTHY HOLLOWAY, ASSISTANT CASTING DIRECTOR AT LONDON FILMS, DESCRIBES THE STRANGE PEOPLE SHE MEETS IN THE COURSE OF HER WORK. WHAT ATTRACTS THEM TO FILMS, SHE ASKS. NOT THE GUINEA-A-DAY... NOT AMBITION... IT MUST BE THE CHILD IN EACH OF US THAT LIKES TO DRESS UP.

THE MOST INTERESTING department in a film studio is the casting department. Not, perhaps, to the casual visitor, who is usually overwhelmed by the vast array of files and card indexes; but to the Casting Director every one of those card records is a human contact. I have the records of over 10,000 people, most of whom I have personally interviewed. They vary in age from babies of a few months to one old man who claims to be 107. Every race and nationality is represented in those files; Negroes, Chinese, Mexicans, Javanese—I can even put my finger on a Tahitian girl. And the variety of accomplishments they boast is amazing. There are wire-walkers, knife-throwers, parachute jumpers, animal imitators—one man can imitate over 200 strange noises from the croak of a bull-frog, which he once had to do for me, to the buzzing of a circular-saw, or the trumpeting of an elephant.

Doctors, boxers, clergymen

Many of them are ex-Naval and Army officers who have seen service in the remotest corners of the Empire. When I have time I like to listen to the stories of their adventures. I have ex-doctors, ex-prize-fighters, ex-schoolmasters and even an ex-clergyman. One man has been a war-correspondent in nearly every quarter of the globe where the enmities of mankind have made front page news. He is also willing to tame a lion or a python for me if I wish. Another man hunted elephants in Ceylon; he can do anything you like with the huge creatures and talks to them in the language of the native mahouts, which is quite different from any other human language and understood only by the animals themselves. Still another worked in the frozen north, carrying provisions to the trappers in their snow-bound outposts by dog-sleigh. He speaks the language of the Eskimos and Anascopie Indians—what use it will ever be to me I do not know, but there it is amongst my records. What attracts most of these people to the films I have never been able to understand. Not the occasional guinea, for surely there are better and easier ways for people with their experience to earn more than they can ever hope to do at film work. Not ambition, for most of them are content to remain in the crowd. It must be the child that is in each of us that loves to dress up and pretend, or, deeper than this it may provide an illusory gratification for some repressed impulse.

Then there are the letters I get from all over the world asking how the writer can become a film actor. These people are serious, no crowd work for them, they want to *act*. "All my life," they tell me, "I have longed to act." Most of them assure me, "This is not the letter of a screen-struck girl" (or boy, for there are as many men as women with this burning desire to be somebody else for a space), "I feel I have it in me to become a great actor." This is surely the only profession to which people feel they are born without the need for training or preparation of any kind. Most of them expect to be given leading roles at once, just a few are willing to accept "a small part to commence," but all are confident of eventual stardom. Those who live a reasonable distance from the Studio I interview, but seldom do I find one who could possibly live up to his or her own bright hopes. The ones I feel sorriest for are the "second Marie Dresslers," they are pathetic—and so numerous. Usually one can form a fairly good impression of people from their letters, but sometimes I get a surprise.

One day my usual letter of advice and discouragement was answered by one so full of confident assurance that I was constrained to see the writer, a woman of over 50. "I have run through the whole gamut of human emotions," she wrote. "I have a strong personality and can make an audience laugh and cry at my will"—and a lot more to the same effect. When I made an appointment she wrote and told me how wise I had been to do so for I should find in her the actress for whom the world had been waiting. As the time of the appointment approached I felt almost nervous myself at the prospect of meeting such an overwhelming personality; but when she was announced there toddled into my office a little middle-aged woman so small that sitting on an ordinary chair her toes barely touched the floor, and so timid that she could only answer my questions in a whisper. I suppose she is still dreaming of the worlds she might have conquered.

Blonde to-day, Brunette to-morrow

All these people who find their way into my files, either because of previous film experience or because of some specialised knowledge or ability in other lines, are classified under various headings. Those who skate or ski, ride horseback or follow other sports exceptionally well have their own categories. Then there are the character headings, barmaids, nurses, typists, smart matrons, duchesses, debutantes, etc. Crooks may be "tough" or sinister; professional men are divided into doctors, lawyers, bank managers, clergymen and so on. Each actor may be found under a dozen or more different headings. Now that we have begun to make colour films I have to classify people according to the colour of their hair, but owing to the versatility of the hairdressers' art and the changeability of woman this part of my file is by no means reliable, for the brunette of to-day is the blonde of to-morrow, and the silver-haired matron may be a flaming red-head next week.

The art of casting, quite apart from its practice in one's job, is very liable to encroach

There were not enough steeple-jacks in London, so ex-sailors were employed for climbing this 90 foot Tower for "Things to Come"!

Below: Kings, Judges, Princes, Peers, Soldiers, Sailors and Statesmen, massed for a scene in "The Man who could work Miracles"

upon one's leisure and even become an obsession. It is no longer possible to seek relaxation in fiction, for one is all the time "casting the parts," and every story becomes a procession of well-known film-faces. Every visit to the theatre or cinema, whether official or not, is a Search for Talent. In tubes and buses, in shops and restaurants one is for every scrutinising and categorising—and often repining. If only one could have had that man sitting in the opposite corner for the Stockbroker last week—what a splendid type! Or that girl, wouldn't she have been exactly right in the Draper's Shop scene. The man is probably an undertaker and the girl a photographer's receptionist, for people in real life so seldom look like their jobs. That is why the Casting Director's task is so difficult. All his life he is searching for the Perfect Type, and yet when we come down to essentials there is no such thing as "type." For instance, everybody is quite sure what a doctor should look like because everybody knows one, yet when I cast a doctor somebody is sure to say he "doesn't look the type," because the man does not resemble any doctor that he knows, although he may be the living image of my medical adviser. What, for example, is the Tram Conductor "type"? There are just as many types of tram conductor as there are uniforms to fit them, and the only detail in which they resemble one another is the thickening of the thumb that operates the ticket punch—which is quite unimportant in a film!

The social scale, too, is of very little account in this business of so-called "type casting," when, of course, the characters do not have to speak, as in crowds and cameo "bits." I learned that useful lesson very early in my career through listening to one of the "extras" telling of the many and varied parts he has played, including—to his own surprise—that of a bishop. I had seen him as a British Museum attendant, a Gas Inspector and a gamekeeper and several other unexalted characters, but a bishop was the last thing for which I should have dreamed of suggesting him. I tried to visualise him in cope and mitre and was immediately struck by his surprising suitability for such a role. From that moment I looked at actors with a different eye.

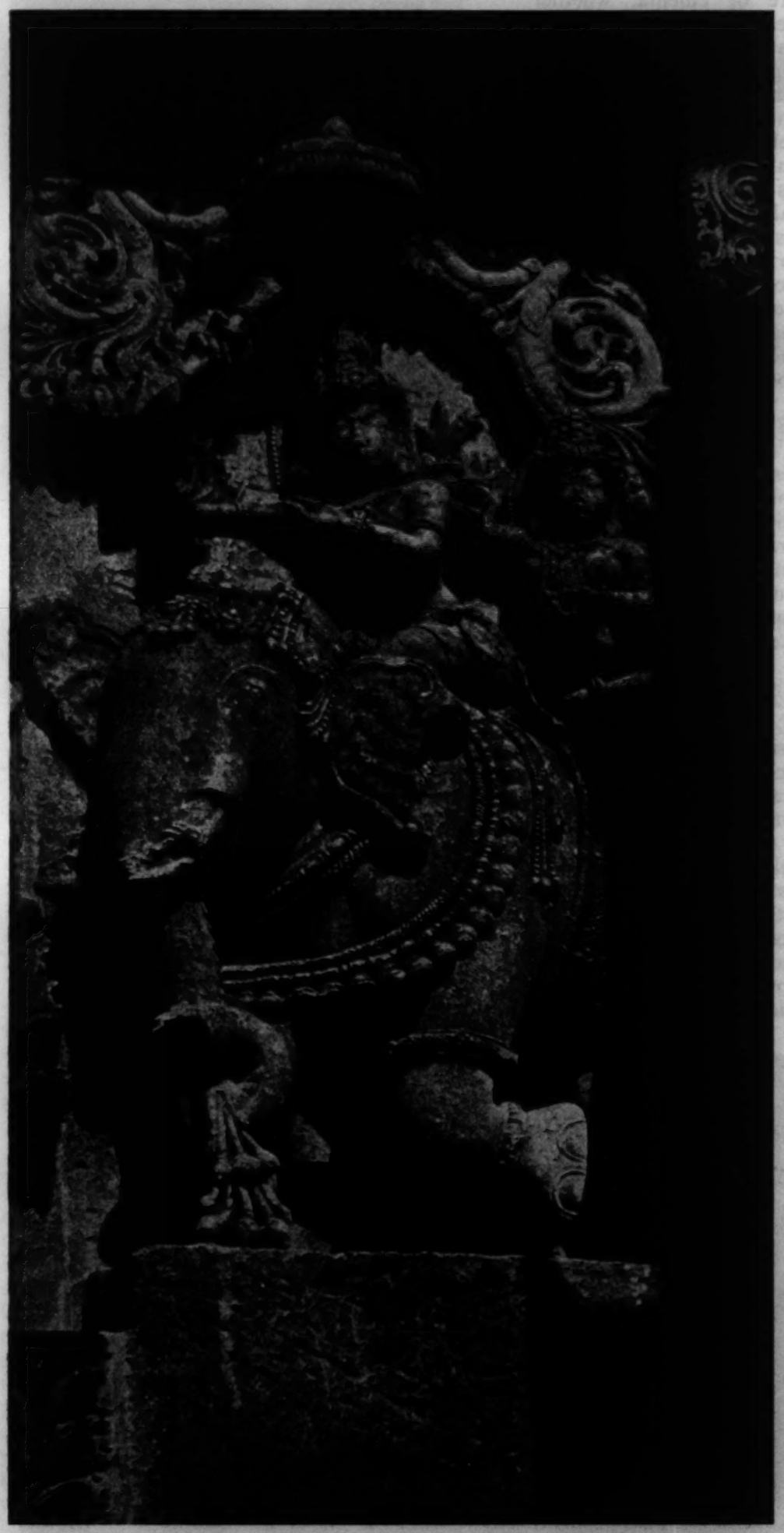
Foreign types

Foreign directors are sometimes difficult to work with as they are all the time subconsciously looking for their own national types. Suppose, for instance, one is casting for a French director and an engine-driver is wanted. Then compare the difference between the grave, careworn man of near middle-age who pilots our great expresses, and the cheerful, jaunty young French drivers who hurl their shrieking locomotives across the Continent with such an air of reckless abandon. There are shining exceptions: such men as Alexander Korda, the great cosmopolitan, and René Clair, whose art is universal, are entirely free from the restrictions imposed by these racial images.

My own opinion—I don't know if it is shared by other Casting Directors, but I do know that in stating it I shall incur the wrath of every Director and Producer in the industry—is that Casting is a distinct art; as distinct from directing as sculpture is from painting. Some painters, of course, are also good sculptors, but few excel in both arts. So the casting of a picture should be left entirely to the Casting Director. He spends his life studying the actors, their personalities, their reactions to different methods of direction, their ability to interpret different roles and their transformation in costume and make-up. It requires a specialised imagination possessed by few directors to look at a row of very ordinary young men in modern lounge suits and know which one will most successfully wear a cavalier's cloak or a friar's habit. I look forward to the time when the Casting Director's job will be taken seriously, when he will be entirely responsible for his part in the production and not merely regarded as a man (or woman) with a card index and a good memory for faces.

ROBERT FLAHERTY INTERPRETS THE NATURE-SPIRIT OF INDIA

by Penelope Chetwode



[*Frances Flaherty*

Deep relief sculpture on Hoysalesvara temple of Indra, Lord of the Heavens and his wife, on their elephant. The Hindu temple at Halebid is the largest in Mysore, but remains unfinished. It dates from the late twelfth century and is built of light grey stone, which is soft when quarried but hardens on exposure.

INDIA HAS, IN the last few years, been "discovered" as an effective setting for films. *Clive of India*, *Bengal Lancer*, and *The Charge of the Light Brigade* constitute the most successful outcome (from a box-office point of view) of this discovery. But to get any idea of the country itself, we have had to wait for Robert Flaherty's *Elephant Boy*. The first three films were largely studio productions filled with penny bazaar orientalism. *Bengal Lancer* was an outstandingly good thriller but the only really convincing shot in it (so far as India was concerned) was that of the railway bridge at Agra.

Now, at last, we have a film of India itself. To make it, Flaherty spent over a year in Mysore, and he made full use of his peculiar genius for sympathy with and understanding of a foreign people. The fundamental difference between Indians and Westerners lies solely in their respective attitudes to human beings. In the West, man has always been, and still is, the measure of all things. He considers that animals have no souls and are, therefore vastly inferior to him. They simply exist for his pleasure: to hunt, eat, or domesticate. The vegetable kingdom comes still lower in his estimation. The Indian thinks just the opposite: according to his view, everything has a soul, that is to say everything contains in itself a part of the great Universal soul.

I remember so well a conversation I and a friend once had with the orthodox Brahman Congress leader, Pandit Malaviya. He turned to me and said: "Miss Chetwode, I see God in you." I looked across at my friend with a superior air. "And," continued the Pandit, turning to my friend, "I see God in you. And" (here he pointed to a speck on the wall) "I see God in that ant."

Once you have grasped the significance of this outlook, you are halfway to an understanding of Indian art and life. You will realise that a human being is of no more importance than a canna lily. You will sympathise with a king who renounces his throne to become an ascetic and identify himself with nature. Robert Flaherty has realised and appreciated this Indian sense of unity, and has made you feel throughout the film that Toomai is identified with the jungle: that he is a part of the teak leaves and creepers and elephants, just as they are part of him.

Mysore is the ideal Indian state in which to develop this theme. It has vast areas of primæval jungle, it is a stronghold of orthodox Hinduism and Jainism, it has large mediæval temples rising from the red earth like huge straggling indestructible tropical plants.

Mystical ties between man and nature, characteristic of India, is the great theme which inspires Robert Flaherty's new Film

ELEPHANT BOY

Toomai, the elephant boy, asleep in the jungle.

One of its most remarkable features (of which there are some superb shots in the film) is the hill at Sravana Belgola, the sacred seat of the Jains* in South India. The granite summit of this hill has been carved (in the late tenth century) into the largest free-standing monolithic statue in the world. It is reached by a flight of six hundred steps and, when the great Duke of Wellington, as Colonel Wellesley, visited Sravana Belgola in 1800, he estimated the statue's height at 60 feet. The actual height is 57 feet and the figure represents the Jain Saint Gommatesvara practising an austere form of yoga. The saint has identified himself so completely with nature that creepers climb over his body, ant-hills rise about his thighs and snakes crawl over his giant feet.

The two photographs of sculpture which illustrate this article are not actually stills from the film, though they were shot by Frances Flaherty on location. I have included them because they balance so perfectly the picture of Toomai asleep in the jungle: in actual life, the boy, the rich tangled undergrowth, and the great rough trunk of the elephant: in the sculpture human figures, luxuriant foliage and animals all seemingly growing out of one another and all of equal importance.

[*Frances Flaherty*

Frieze from the base of the Hoysaleswara temple, at Halebid, Mysore, representing sardulas (mythical lions).

* The Jains form a religious body, quite distinct from Hinduism but having strong philosophical affinities with Buddhism. They are famous for the strictness with which they observe their chief doctrine of Ahimsa, non-taking of life. Jains can frequently be seen walking along with cloths over their mouths and noses to avoid breathing in and destroying flies and microbes.

HARRY LANGDON

There is a man in town whose name was magic to many eight years ago, and, to those with affection for the great clowns of the cinema, it is magic still. HARRY LANGDON, the follower of Charlie Chaplin in Sennett's two-reel comedies and, later on, the baby-face star of *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp* and *The Strong Man*, has been making plans for a film with Joe Rock.

There is nothing of the sober clown about Langdon, but a brilliance of comedy in every description. He recounts the earnestness of the Sennett lot—"these funny guys have no sense of humour"—and rolls out the names of the able men who came from these early schools of two-reel comedy. It is an astonishing list, proving if proof were necessary that the best of all trainings for a director is in gag work. It includes Frank Capra (*Deeds*), once gag man for Langdon, Frank Lloyd (*Bounty*), Roy del Ruth (director of *Born to Dance*), Darryl Zanuck (*Pasteur*), Lewis Milestone, Norman Taurog and Lloyd Bacon. We are still it would seem in the direct Sennett tradition, though the old man himself has retired to a ranch in Canada.

The great thing about Langdon always was the logic of his comedy, and in this respect he seemed often superior to Chaplin. He conceived the notion of a clown, wholly innocent—a sort of God-will-send-his-angels-to-watch-over-you figure—and held to it so strictly that his themes achieved sometimes immense depth of reference. The moment when as the *deus ex machina* of *The Strong Man* he brought down the walls of Jericho and confounded the wicked is still one of the highest moments in comedy.

Langdon is playing with a script for a Coronation film—based on the notion of an impoverished duke who lets his windows on the line of march. There is more of the comic dereliction of our day in his description than in the whole of *Modern Times*. One wishes it could be made and that Langdon's creative talent could be used to the benefit of British films. It is an opportunity not to be lost.

Meetings and Acquaintances

Visitors to the Brussels Film Festival were impressed by the excellent organisation under MOLDAVSKY, mouse-like and energetic electrical engineer. He is an expert on electric recording and radio problems, and spends all his spare time in studying the cultural aspects of stage and cinema. He made good use of a recent business tour of the U.S.A. and returned full of information about government supported efforts.

The Appreciation Leagues of Schools and Universities impressed him as having an increasing influence on Hollywood production. The Federal theatres, state-subsidised, are putting across new and vital stuff, he says, and quotes *The Living Paper*, a hot-news *March of Time* in dramatic form, and *Bury the Dead*, a satiric play. He also visited Disney's studios and was excited by the almost communistic traditions on which they are run. He has now gone back to Brussels to continue his work with colleague Thirifays of the Club de l'Ecran (*World Film News* October issue), for better films in Belgium.

Among the shining instruments of his Wardour Street recording-room meet white-coated HARRY SHERIDAN, designer, engineer, producer and ace sound recordist.

One of the pioneers of the British film industry, Sheridan started in 1907 as an assistant operator at Terry's Cinema in the Strand. Thence he worked his way to chief operator, to theatre manager, to chief engineer of a big circuit. After the War he introduced the Automaticket system to England, and took a brief holiday from movies to supervise the Automaticket installation throughout London's Undergrounds and in the West-End theatres. Then came sound, and back went Sheridan to films, to set up his own recording studio and to specialise in the recording of shorts.

Sheridan probably has a closer knowledge of the commercial market for shorts than anyone in the field, and he predicts a big demand in the coming years. Two conditions, he says, are necessary for the successful development of British shorts. First, a supply of young directors with fresh ideas and technical ability; second, a good understanding of the economic limits of the market. He maintains that if the shorts industry is to build itself on its own profits (and not repeat the sorry tale of feature production) it is up to the industry to make cheap production an everyday reality.

Sheridan has set himself to apply this policy to his own practice. He has made it his business to encourage new directors, to train them in the economics of production and to see their films through to the distribution stage. In his own field of sound he believes that efficiency and quiet working can take a big strain off the directors' shoulders. By insisting on order and method in his studio he has eliminated waste of time and its chief cause—fuss. His equipment, spotlessly kept, is of his own design. He re-records from wax, thus saving intermediate prints. He demands clean cutting-rooms and careful handling of cutting-copies. In four years he has recorded 800 films and has seldom had to re-take for technical reasons.

In a world of extravagance and ballyhoo he has made the important contribution of sanity and method.

J. B. Priestley

J. B. PRIESTLEY has been co-operating with Cavalcanti in the production of a film on Switzerland, *We Live in Two Worlds*. It is a new kind of documentary. Priestley calls it a Filmtalk, the idea being to present in film form something of the quality of his essays. The theme is the paradox of the modern citizen who with all his deep-laid local and national loyalties, is being driven by his own economics to a new system of international loyalties. The Swiss peasant, detached and romantic as he may appear in his mountains, provides a brilliant example for the thesis, no economy being more tied to export and international relationships.

Priestley appears in the film and demonstrates an art of popularisation which is as powerful in terms of film as it is in writing. Cavalcanti's Swiss material is brilliantly shot and illustrates a modernised Switzerland very different from the usual picture-postcard version. He has brought in Jaubert, composer for *Zéro de Conduite*, *L'Atalante*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire* and *Mayerling*, to write his music.

Priestley talks of sitting down to learn the technique of script writing—no doubt with thoughts in mind of turning *Wonder Hero* and *Angel Pavement* into film form. His sense of satire and his affection for common people and common situations would be healthy additions to British cinema at the present time. Priestley is above all a great craftsman, as his *tour de force* in stage craft *Dangerous Corner* amply demonstrated. One looks for an object lesson in active narrative and fast dialogue from his script writing.

ENGLAND

The public's delight in the fast fading glories of the Russian aristocracy continues unabated, and after the extraordinary success in London of Sir Cedric Hardwick's *Tovarich* it would seem that Miss Dietrich is on safe ground with *Knight Without Armour*. This is a screen version of the James Hilton novel, and in it Miss Dietrich plays the part of a Russian countess who is rescued during the revolution of 1917 by a young member of the British Secret Service (Robert Donat). Jacques Feyder, whose *La Kermesse Héroïque* was acclaimed by critics on both sides of the Atlantic as one of the best pictures of 1936, is directing and his native wit should give the story piquancy as well as excitement. Miss Dietrich will probably find the settings a little different from her last screen visit to Russia, when she was confronted with the amazing gargoyles of Sternberg's *The Scarlet Empress*.

BALCON-METRO

The Michael Balcon-Metro alliance, recently celebrated, may be expected to bring forth some really good English films during the coming year. *The Wind and the Rain*, a delightful little story of university life in Scotland, will be one of the first pictures to be made and the schedule will probably include *Silas Marner*. Ben Goetz of Hollywood, will supervise.

* * *

That very popular continental play, *Storm in a Teacup*, in which the mongrel "Scruffy" battles for his life against officialdom, is being completed by Victor Saville Productions at Denham, and Saville has also made *Dark Journey*.

* * *

Thornton Freeland has recently returned from the Sahara with shots of the yearly salt caravan of 14,000 camels for Capitol Films' *Jericho*. Paul Robeson is the star and Thornton Freeland the director. The expedition, with cameramen John Boyle and T. A. Glover, Guy Bellairs (driver), and Kay Kettlewell (assistant cameraman) obtained spectacular shots with as many as 3,500 to 4,000 camels in the picture at the same time.

UP THE FLAG

Meanwhile a wave of patriotic fervour sweeps over all fronts and will shortly bring forth more than one stirring episode of martial or nautical life. Chief amongst these will probably be Norman Walker's *The Navy Eternal*, which he is directing for Herbert Wilcox Productions with the wholehearted co-operation of the authorities (Whitehall no longer withhold its blessings from such enterprises). The story is by Bartimeus and the cast includes Hazel Terry, Richard Cromwell, Robert Douglas, Noah Beery, H. B. Warner and a host of bluejackets, to say nothing of the "Nelson," "Rodney," "Iron Duke" and "Royal Oak." Miss Terry deserves a better fate than befell her in her screen debut, *Marriage of Corbal*, and it is to be hoped that this picture will give a real opportunity to show her ability.

* * *

1937 will see Elisabeth Bergner in an English version of one of her greatest successes—*Der Träumende Mund*, which she made some years ago in Germany.

Gaumont British have Robert Stevenson's *King Solomon's Mines* on the point of completion, and he will next direct the airline feature, *Non Stop, New York*, with Oscar Homolka, Desmond Tester and Nova Pilbeam.

* * *

Lennox Robinson is adapting Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* for B.I.P. Herbert Wilcox is preparing *Victoria the Great* for production at Pinewood.

Men Who Matter

AMERICA

The film trade has recently been celebrating the twenty-five-year jubilee of Adolph Zukor, head of Paramount and a noble warrior of the movies. Many of the great developments in the film business have been associated with his name. His first feat in film was to bring famous players from the stage to the screen and in this sense was a pioneer in putting cinema under the heel of the theatre.

The greatest of the Zukor phases was his partnership with Lasky. With Zukor operating the moves—and his quiet reserved style concealed a master trader—and Lasky's sense of showmanship behind production, came the period of Paramount supremacy between 1923 and 1928. These were the brave days that produced the epics of *The Covered Waggon*, *Thundering Herd*, *Pony Express*, and *Beau Geste* school. De Mille, Griffith, Cruze, Flaherty, Schoedsach, Cooper and von Sternberg were the directorial names in that Paramount period with Richard Dix, Ronald Colman, Gary Cooper, Clara Bow and William Powell taking over from the passing generation of Swansons, Meighans, Pola Negris, Jannings and Naldis.

When the Zukor-Lasky partnership broke it marked the end of an era. The swelling ambitions of Paramount with its flashy new circuit of public theatres and its seventeen million dollar centre on Broadway brought in the banks. The effective control passed from the old showmen to Wall Street.

Zukor belonged to the days when the showmen in fierce competition outcalculated, outshouted and outsmarted each other. He was not the least of the great figures in that scramble for honour and wealth which created the well-known trade marks of Metro-Goldwyn, Paramount, Fox, Warners and United Artists. Some men served their hour, some their generation and some mankind. Zukor—betwixt and between—served his generation. All honour to him.

* * *

Darryl F. Zanuck has said that "Slowly emerging from the throes of a tragic depression, men and women are coming into a broader and happier outlook." It is calculated that the kind of entertainment to go with prosperity should be light-hearted, and musical films predominate in all the companies' schedules. Metro is making *The Broadway Melody of* 1937, with Eleanor Powell, and Irving Berlin's *As Thousands Cheer*. *Swing High, Swing Low* from Paramount will present Carole Lombard as a singing and dancing star. There are many others.

GREATER REALISM

On the other hand the rising intelligence of the film public (or the rising respect of producers for it), proved by such films as *The Petrified Forest* and *Pasteur*, will be responsible for greater "realism." High seriousness is still being avoided for the most part, but stories will be given authentic and credible backgrounds. *The Good Earth* and Kipling's *Kim* due from Metro; *Men With Wings*, a survey of the history of flying, from Paramount; *Lost Horizon*, the new Capra production, from Columbia; and Universal's version of Remarque's *The Road Back*, illustrate this healthy trend.

History-and-hokum remain a profitable recipe. We are promised a biography of Beethoven from Warner Brothers; *Parnell* (with Gable) and *Marie Antoinette* (with Shearer) come from Metro. *The Life of Alfred Nobel* from Universal, and *Marco Polo*—a Goldwyn-Fairbanks Sr. production—from United Artists. There is talk of a *Chopin* film with Lederer, a life of *Zola* with Muni, and biographies of *Danton*, *Robin Hood* and (as always) of *Joan of Arc*.

* * *

Romantic "costume" films will include *Pride and Prejudice* (with Gable and Shearer), *The Prisoner of Zenda*, United Artists' *Wuthering Heights* (with Sylvia Sidney and Charles Boyer), Paramount's *Maid of Salem*, a story of witchcraft in American colonial days with Claudette Colbert, and Radio's *Michael Strogoff*.

* * *

DE MILLE'S EDUCATIONAL

The first educational film ever produced at a major studio for exclusive distribution to schools has just been completed at Paramount studios under the supervision of Cecil B. de Mille. The picture shows the developments of the plain regions of North America. A number of scenes from de Mille's spectacle, *The Plainsman*, have been incorporated.

The attention of the Film Council has been drawn to certain errors in the analysis of British Film Finance in the last issue of *World Film News*.

1. It was stated that Mr. Harold G. Judd was appointed Receiver of the City Film Corporation by Aldgate Trustees, Ltd.

Mr. Judd was appointed Receiver of New Ideal Pictures, Ltd., and not of the City Film Corporation, with which company he has had no connection.

2. It should be made clear that Aldgate Trustees, Ltd. did not guarantee to the film industry any sums of money, but, as their name implies, acted only as trustees for other parties.

3. With regard to Messrs. Glanvill, Enthoven & Co., and H. J. Enthoven & Sons, Ltd., it was stated that a shareholder of the latter was also a director of the former concern. It was not intended to suggest that the said firm and company were in any way connected with each other or with Mr. Judd's directorship of Pinewood Studios, Ltd.

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LEADING COUNSEL

Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. on
Our Tower of Babel

Generally speaking, the only British element nowadays in a so-called "British" film is its home of origin, in the same way as one classes a picture made in Hollywood as "American."

The producer is generally a man of almost any nationality—German, Italian, French, British, Rumanian, American. The director may possibly be an American, like Tay Garnett, Raoul Walsh, George Cukor, William K. Howard, Henry Hathaway, or Jack Conway. Equally, it is possible, or, for that matter, more than probable, that he is continental. There is the famous German Lubitsch; the Armenian Rouben Mamoulian, the French René Clair, the Italian Gregory La Cava, the Austrian Josef von Sternberg—all these are famous directors, who would never lay claim to anything approaching one hundred per cent. British or American nationality.

Cameras? Well, run your eye over the famous names among cameramen working on "British" and "American" pictures. The names of a few—Georges Perinal is French, Gunther Krampf is Austrian, Victor Armenise is Italian, Curt Courant is German, Jimmy Wong Howe is Chinese, Phil Tannura—Italian, Charles Rosher—British, Oliver Marsh—American.

As it is with producers, directors and cameramen, so is it with the greater portion of studio executives in the U.S. and England. But when we come to the sock and buskin proper, well, we have pretty well every nationality in the world represented!

No, extreme nationalism in the art of entertainment has ever worked. It limits expansion and dwarfs progress.—*Film Renter.*

Paul Rotha on
The Good Short

The good short demands as much skill and production value as a good feature. In the space of two reels every foot must be packed with action. There is no time for dawdling; no time for lengthy "art" effects. Tempo and continuity must be fast.

If you think of it, twenty minutes of celluloid is a long time. To use that time properly, either to tell a story or to put across a real-life subject, demands a great skill and experience of movie construction. The Mack Sennett comedies were among the best things that movies have given us. Disney's cartoons are often marvels of construction, from which the writers of feature films might learn a lot. And most of our British documentaries have a tempo and scenario construction lacking from our big studio creations.

It is important to remember, I think, that most of the technicians working in the documentary field are *interested* in the making of short films. To their credit they have no illusions that their films are world-shattering super-pictures. They have decided to learn the job of making a particular kind of film, and are content in that job.

Alfred Hitchcock on
The real spirit of England

British Film Producers know only two strata of English existence, the poor and the rich. On these they base the plots of their films which go out to the kinemas of the world, conveying the expression to other audiences that the English live in either cottages or cocktail cabinets, and speak with their lips twisted or with a plum in their throats.

Totally ignored by British film-makers is that vital central stratum of British humanity, the middle class. Forgotten are the men who leap on 'buses, the girls who pack in the Tube, the commercial travellers, the newspaper men, the girls who manicure your nails, the composers who write the dance numbers, the city clerk and his week-end Rugger, the stockbroker and his round of golf, the typist and her boy-friend, the kinema queues, the palais de danse crowds, the people in the charabancs, on the beaches, at the race-courses, the fellows who love gardening, the chaps who lounge in pubs, the secretaries of clubs, the chorus girls, the doctors, the car salesmen, the speed cops, the school teachers.

In them lies the spirit of England that, for some unknown reason, is almost entirely ignored on the screen. American producers have not halted where we have stood still. They have exploited the drama of their people and made it a feature of eight out of ten of their films. If we in this country only got our education from the screen, we should know more of the life of a middle-class American than we do of the English people who fill our trains and trams at rush hours.

The higher you run your finger up the British social scale, the faster the drama dies. The veneer of civilisation is so thick among the rich that individual qualities are killed. There is nothing to film, nothing worth putting on the screen. Voices are the same, expressions are *nil*, personalities are suppressed. The upper classes are too "bottled up" to be of any use as colourful screen material, too stiffened with breeding to relax into the natural easiness and normality required by the screen.

But come downwards into that more colourful belt of beings, the middle class, and observe their unhampered attitude of life. . . . Here are people who smile and mean it. Here are expressions that come swiftly and naturally without restraint, here are manners and ways flowing easily, speech unaffected, emotions more free, instinct sharper. In other words, here is grand camera stuff waiting at the Industry's door.—*Kine Weekly.*

Paul Rotha—*(contd.)*

This is one reason why the documentary film units have built up loyalties and team spirit, so essential for the production of a continuance of good films.

It is true that some forthcoming documentaries look like running to second feature length, because their subjects are big enough to demand a wide canvas, as in Shaw's *The Future's in the Air*, which has the whole of the Empire Air Routes and the Transatlantic Flights to play with. But the major part of our documentary films is one- and two-reeler work.—*Kine Weekly.*

At the beginning of each year the cinema trade papers—*Kine*, *Renter*, and *Cinema*—produce their annual numbers. Fat and gaudy with company announcements, they are also rich mines of opinion; for anyone and everyone in the film world is consulted on what he thought of last year and what he dreams for next. It is from the annual numbers these excerpts are cut, and we take this opportunity of congratulating our fellow editors on more brilliant issues than ever before.

Marion Grierson
(Editor W.F.N.)

Ned Depinet, R.K.O., President, on
Catering for the Cultured

The best thing happening for the industry during 1936, in my opinion, was the large increase in attendance at the cinema theatres on the part of the more cultured people who appreciate fine entertainment. While our business has been built primarily on the appeal of motion pictures to the masses, and the most successful attractions have been those of very wide popular favour, additional profits are certain to accrue to producer, distributors and exhibitor as we further the interest of the more discriminating clientele who have in the past sought their entertainment to a great extent in other directions than at the cinema.

This has been accomplished during 1936 more than ever before by producers who have made pictures, which, while they have drawn the so-called habitual "fans," have been of such outstanding merit in theme, story, acting and patronage and applause of the intelligentsia.

The approach is by presenting better pictures, and then making sure that the more discerning element of the population is told about them.

One of the best things that could happen for the industry in 1937 would be a considerable advance in the study of motion pictures and of photoplay appreciation in the schools. I am aware that in England this development has not progressed to any extent, but it is something that your executives might well strive to foster.

In the United States. . . . At the present time upwards of 5,000 high schools teach photoplay as a regular part of the curriculum, and this number is being constantly increased. Educators have come to the conclusion that it is just as important to inculcate in the minds of the young an understanding and appreciation of fine motion pictures, as it is to have them study good literature or the best in music or art. This movement is creating a bigger and more discriminating advance for the future.

The Cinema.

Hollywood Story Conference

SMOKE fills the room, smoke and pregnant silence. Ash-trays are heaped with tobacco stubs, shredded paper matches, and twisted and mangled wire clips. Scratch-paper, etched with strange, formless designs, litter the receptacles. Hands hold glowing cigarettes from which smoke curls and fills the room.

This is the office of the supervisor, the man who is producing the picture for the studio. He sits behind a massive desk piled with manuscripts, inter-office communications and other memoranda. Within reach is the dictaphone, which frequently interrupts and demands attention. A light on the machine flashes, he lowers a jigger, picks up the earpiece and listens. "Yes, D.R." he says, coming sharply out of his twilight sleep. "Ha? Who, D.R.? Him? Nah, I should say not! Not even fa buttons!" he hangs up and again blankets himself in lethargy.

He is an unhappy fellow, this supervisor, addicted to the habit of consuming generous quantities of bicarbonate of soda—straight. Ugh! (Some say the responsibility of producing a half dozen pictures a year brought about his nervous stomach. As a matter of fact, his jittering belly is the result of weathering three successive changes of régime. *You* would have dropped dead!)

There are many things troubling him—I mean, in addition to his pictures. He hasn't had time to discuss the blueprints of his new home with the architect. And Joycine has been raising holy hell with him again. "Fa Chri'sakes," she said only that morning, "if Robert Taylor, an actor, can give Barbara Stanwyck a star sapphire ring, it seemsta me that you, an execative, can give me a little somethin' fa the wrist! Jeezus, evveybody's commentin' how I'm wearin' last year's jewlerry!" Two grand he dropped a week ago over the tables of the Clover Club and Joycine is belly-aching about presents yet! That dizzy broad don't know from nothing!

In one corner, hiding behind his outstretched legs, sits the dialogue writer. He, too, has his troubles. He places imaginary pince-nez on his nose, an excuse for closing a pair of leaden peepers in great need of sleep. Why the hell doesn't he cut out this chasing around till four-five o'clock in the morning? No wonder he's all pooped out at these conferences. What wouldn't he give for

Suddenly the producer stirs and comes to life. "Fellas" he says "we're getting no place. Here we got a very inarresting situation . . . one thing we still got to figger out is why he's in love with her."

(With Acknowledgments to New Theatre)

eight solid hours of sleep! He removes his imaginary pince-nez and now shades his eyes with his hands to simulate profound contemplation. But this is another attempt to surrender to slumber's ineluctable powers.

In another corner sits the continuity writer, his pencil busily scratching at the yellow tablet he holds. He writes his name, again and again. He tires of this and writes his collaborator's name but quickly returns to his own. He is fairly happy, this continuity writer. He hasn't the troubles which beset the other two. All he has to worry about is getting some cash to the bank before it closes to cover the cheque he gave to Caretti for that case of Scotch. Life for him, you see, is comparatively simple.

Suddenly the producer stirs and comes to life. "Fellas," he says, rising and straightening his trousers, "we're getting no place. Here we got a very inarresting situation where Clyde is in love with Ellen. But the one thing we still got to figger out is why he's in love with her."

"It's simple," says the continuity writer. "He sees her wading in the stream, see? The wind is blowing against her dress, see? So he gets one hinge of those beautiful casabas and, mama, he goes for her hook, line and sinker. It's simple."

"I dunno," says the executive, giving his face a dry wash. "You think the audience will swallow that?"

"Swallow that? Fa Chri'sakes, wouldn't you go for some beautiful dame with a pair of wonderful jallapees way out to here?"

"I would," the supervisor is forced to admit. "I'm only wondering if the audience would, that's all."

And so follows a discussion of the story and the motives which impel the characters to behave as they do. It must be hard to believe, when one sees a film in which the players behave like congenital idiots, that their antics were carefully planned, that the situations in which they are involved were fully discussed and analysed, and yet that is exactly what occurs in these story conferences.

There is no limit to the number of participants in these office debates. I recall one such discussion on a picture called *Make Me A Star*, on which I was assigned. This item was based on *Merton of the Movies*, a highly successful stage-play which George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly adapted from the novel by Harry Leon Wilson. Paramount had previously made a silent version of that comedy.

Present at the story session were the producer, his aide, a continuity writer, a gag man, the director and his own idea man (I was told I was also in attendance). We argued, reasoned and fought for hours. Finally our troupe submitted a version which in turn was given to a new set of writers with ideas and story conferences of their own.

There is a strange alchemy which a story undergoes at these studio clinics. The writer and the producer may be wildly enthusiastic about an idea, but after a series of these frenzied interviews compromises are made. What once seemed gay and bright by a series of almost imperceptible changes becomes dull and leaden (the writer doesn't know—self-hypnosis has set in).

I don't believe there is a single screen playwright (the phrase belongs to Celluloidia) who consciously writes down for the movies or who deliberately palms off a meretricious script because of his contempt for the medium. Writers may whine and complain and yammer about Hollywood, but like our citizens who criticise this country, none of them wants to "go back where you came from."

CHANGING ATTITUDE

And there is no reason why he should. The screen is an eloquent and powerful medium of self-expression. But because he has the enforced collaboration of a story-room savant with arbitrary ideas (who employ an army of writers, if necessary, to translate *his* ideas), the writer's position becomes as horizontal as the lady in the red kimono who also performs a service.

There are refreshing signs, however, of a change in the attitude of the studio towards its creative forces. Columbia discovered that a good writer and a good director, if left alone, could make a damned good picture. And thus Robert Riskin and Frank Capra were permitted to make many highly delightful films, among them *It Happened One Night* and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town.*

Dudley Nichols and John Ford were another writer-director team who received the minimum amount of studio interferences. They therefore have to their credit *The Informer*, one of the best pictures to come out of Hollywood.

There have been other very successful marriages of writers and directors. Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, working with director Howard Hawks, have contributed such exciting screen entertainment as *Scarface*, *Twentieth Century* and *Viva Villa.* (You'll never convince me that *The Barbary Coast*, employing the same combination, wasn't whipped up by MacArthur's seven-year-old daughter.)

STRIP-TEASE ROUTINES

Hecht and MacArthur, however, made a miserable failure of their own producing unit. They had a magnificent opportunity to advance the status of the screen-writer, to show that studio overseers were superfluous, and instead they botched it by such inept and incompetent charades as *Soak the Rich*, *Once in a Blue Moon* and *The Scoundrel*. These superannuated juveniles were busy playing executives when they should have been playing writers. And their appearance in their own pictures marks the nadir of elfin exhibitionism.

Paramount realises the efficacy of these writer-director teams. In fact Ernst Lubitsch, the Gypsy Rose Lee of directors, has produced most successfully when doing his strip-tease routines with Samson Raphaelson. Paramount is the home of other writer-director teams: Claude Binyon and Wesley Ruggles, Clifford Odets and Lewis Milestone, Howard Esterbrook and Frank Lloyd, Grover Jones and Henry Hathaway.

However, these writer-director combinations are rare. At present, smoke fills the room, smoke and—Hell, this is where you came in!

Arthur Kober

Theda Bara—Early screen Juliet

WILL SHAKESPEARE AN OLD HAND AT SCENARIOS

Thirty-six years and forty-seven film versions of Shakespeare's Plays

"Could do a sympathy part when called upon"

Corin and Touchstone, "As You Like It"

WITH MUCH BEATING of the showman's drum three screen versions of Shakespeare's plays were shown last year: *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

To the bystander this "Shakespearean cycle" in the movies looks like a new phenomenon. Critics, too, seem to regard it as unprecedented. As one of them puts it, Shakespeare has passed his screen test. But to those New York research writers, engaged in compiling a Critical Bibliography of the Film in America, all this is old stuff.

To them *As You Like It* is merely the forty-seventh in a long series of film versions of Shakespeare, most of which were made during the first 15 years of the century. In fact something far closer to a genuine Shakespearean cycle in the film occurred 25 years ago, when 14 productions of 12 different Shakespearean plays were released in 1910–11.

To be scrupulously exact, Shakespeare's screen test was passed, not in 1936, but early in 1900, when Sarah Bernhardt was presented in a "talking" picture of the duel scene from *Hamlet*. (To be sure the talking was reproduced separately on an Edison cylinder record, but it was there nevertheless.)

And that little excerpt was almost literally a screen test rather than a film version of Shakespeare. It was only with the period beginning in 1903 when the movies, no longer content with the depiction of the waves breaking on the shores of Dover, had turned to real plots, that producers marched in a body upon the classics generally and upon Shakespeare in particular. In the flood of productions that followed, 14 of the plays were filmed in 5 different countries, several of them in coloured versions, featuring a variety of "big names," ranging from Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree to Theda Bara.

When Cæsar's short tunic was quoted as evidence of movies, immoral influence.

When Beerbohm Tree played Macbeth and Sarah Bernhardt Hamlet.

In fact, in 1911 Shakespeare on the screen was so much a matter of fact that parodies were in order. Beginning with *Romeo and Juliet in Town* (Selig-Polyscope), they reached the all-time high (or low) of *Mike Capulet vs. Pete Montague—How They Fought at the Quarry* (Biograph slapstick, 1914).

Following is a chronological list of the screen versions of Shakespeare's plays in the order of frequency :

Romeo and Juliet, made 7 times, in whole or part, between 1908 and 1936.
Hamlet, 6 times, between 1900 and 1915.
Merchant of Venice, 5 times, between 1901 and 1921.
Midsummer Night's Dream, 4 times between 1909 and 1935.
Macbeth, 4 times between 1908 and 1916.
King Lear, 3 times between 1909 and 1916.
The Tempest, 3 times between 1910 and 1915.
Taming of the Shrew, 3 times between 1908 and 1929.
Othello, 3 times between 1910 and 1932.
Antony and Cleopatra, 3 times between 1910 and 1914.
Julius Cæsar, twice, 1905, 1909.
As You Like It, twice, 1910, 1936.
Merry Wives of Windsor, once, 1910.
Twelfth Night, once, 1910.

AS YOU LIKE IT: The only film version of this play prior to the Bergner production is thus listed in a "Catalogue of Educational Motion Pictures" (1910): "This famous comedy of Shakespeare, done out of doors by a very competent company. 915 feet. Lease price—$118.95."

MERCHANT OF VENICE: A "grand recitation, with 10 exquisite coloured slides," was offered for sale by Harbach and Co., film and photographic supply dealers, in September and October, 1901. Price—$5.

ROMEO AND JULIET: The one-reel version made by Vitagraph in 1908 was advertised as "the only Shakespearean tragedy written around a love story. . . Filmed in Central Park . . . magnificently staged, gorgeously costumed and provided with numerous scenes which were beautifully tinted."

Hollywood Collaborators. "But surely, Mr. Shakespeare, you will admit that two heads are better than one ! . . ."

A Will Dyson cartoon from "Modern Caricatures."

The two-reel version made by Thanhauser in 1911 drew the following effusion in the Motion Picture World: "It is creditable to the makers of the present film that each of the reels tells a story of its own; one of the love story, the other, the tragedy. As the reels were issued at different times, this will help the exhibitor. Some day it is hoped an arrangement will be made which allows of such productions being released at the same time, the only sensible and logical way. . . ."

In a coloured version made by Pathé in 1913 Juliet is betrothed to Tybalt and the character of Paris is omitted entirely.

The two productions made in 1916 (by Quality-Metro and Fox) starred respectively, Francis X. Bushman, Beverly Bayne, Harry Bayne, Harry Hilliard and Theda Bara. Of the latter a reviewer said, "I know that she could do a sympathy part when called upon."

Excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet* appeared in *Morning Glory*, with Katharine Hepburn, and in *Hollywood Revue of* 1929, with Norma Shearer.

TAMING OF THE SHREW: This seems to have been regarded, at least by the critics, as a moral disquisition. Of the Biograph production in 1908, a reviewer says, ". . . it is indeed an object lesson, teaching us to see ourselves as others see us." And of the Urban-Eclipse version in 1911, a different critic remarks, "This Katherine of Shakespeare is a standing sign-mark for parents who permit early indulgence by their girls and who are careless of their education."

THE TEMPEST: The first production was a filming of a stage presentation by Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. Of it a critic says, "This remarkable production taken under the ordinary conditions of stage lighting during representation, illustrates the great advances in animated photography which the motion picture camera has rendered possible. The shipwreck with all its intense realism is reproduced with startling detail. The lightnings flash, the billows leap and roll and break. . . . The film is issued tinted to the suitable weird moonlight colour. . . ."

OTHELLO: Another example of the popularity of the coloured film in the early days. The first screen version, made by Pathé Film d'Art in 1910, was in colour.

MACBETH: The Pathé production released in 1910 was blurbed in the Pathé catalogue as follows : "In order to do justice to the masterpiece of this great writer, the best French actors were employed to take the leading parts. . . ."

The Triangle 8-reel production starring Beerbohm Tree (1916), is described as "the most archaeologically correct version of Shakespeare's tragedy ever made anywhere."

HAMLET: Many of the earlier *Hamlets* seem to have been in name only. The one made by Meliés in 1908 begins with the graveyard scene and is devoted largely to attempts to emphasise Hamlet's madness. Similarly the production by Asta Films, in 1921, "employs the theory that Hamlet was a woman and was in love with Horatio. . . . ."

JULIUS CÆSAR: The first version, made in 1905, is titled "Shakespeare Writing Julius Cæsar." It showed "the author in his study trying to write the scene of Cæsar's murder. Suddenly his thoughts take life and right before him appears an old Roman forum. Shakespeare sits in his armchair and watches all that occurs. . . ."

Another production of his play achieved prominence in 1909, when in a discussion of censorship a "Reverend Gentleman" is quoted as having cited the shortness of Cæsar's tunic to prove that movies were an immoral influence.

Beerbohm Tree as Macbeth

By LANCELOT HOGBEN, PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS AT LONDON UNIVERSITY;
Author of "MATHEMATICS FOR THE MILLION"

IF THE COST OF ONE CRUISER . . .

"If the cost of one cruiser were applied to providing projectors for our schools and the expense of two battleships were devoted to the production of films for the teaching of science, this generation could witness a greater advance of human enlightenment than the world has yet seen."

(*By arrangement with the National Union of Teachers.*)

THE PROBLEMS OF education reconstruction in our own time are as urgent and as singular as those of the Protestant Reformation. The material circumstance which contributed to the great intellectual enlightenment of that time was the invention of a new instrument for diffusing human knowledge. In our own task of making the world outlook of science an open Bible we have at our disposal instruments which transcend the limitations of oral discourse. It is commonplace to say that the cinema has placed new powers in the hands of the educationalist but few educationalists have really grasped what its new powers are. So far the cinema has largely been canvassed as a way of stimulating interest or of conveying in a more vivid and palatable form information which is less attractive when communicated through the medium of print. What we have still to realise is that it can explain many things which many people can never understand at all, if they have to rely on the printed word.

Many people think that the great obstacle to the understanding of science is its reliance on mathematical symbolism. I do not believe that this is true. It is my view that the greatest difficulties both in mathematics and in those branches of science which rely on mathematics do not reside in failure to assimilate the rules of symbolism. More often they reside in failure to visualise the physical construction, model or process which the symbols describe. Cinema can bridge the gulf which now separates people who have a good visual imagination from those who have not.

Limits of the printed word

Dynamics and astronomy are not difficult because they make use of difficult branches of mathematics. To the person who finds them difficult they are equally difficult when the mathematics used is of the simplest kind. The limitation imposed upon the communication of knowledge by the printing press is easiest to see if we consider the implications of a well-known class of optical illusions. All of you know what happens if you draw a cube in perspective with twelve straight lines and then stare at it for some time. After a little while it seems to turn inside out and this happens repeatedly if you go on staring at it. Although this class of optical illusions is commonly mentioned in text-books of physiology and experimental psychology, little if anything has been said about its bearing on education. Every teacher knows perfectly well that many children who can acquit themselves passably in plain geometry experience very great difficulty when they come to solid geometry. This fact is not surprising in the light of the experiment I have cited. There is an inherent ambiguity in flat representations of three-dimensional objects. The longer you go on looking at them the more perplexed you get.

The fourth dimension

Of course, the experienced teacher knows that a little play with plasticine and knitting needles will often surmount the first difficulties of visualisation at this level. What the model does for the three-dimensional object the cinema would do for the four-dimensional process. Simple harmonic motion, the precession of the equinoxes, the relation of celestial and terrestrial co-ordinates of a star, wave motions, the trajectory of a body projected in space, are themes which present insuperable difficulties to a large number of people. They bristle with problems for the teacher, even if he only has to deal with pupils who have a tolerable aptitude for naturalistic studies. With all the resources of stereoscopic cinematography, I believe that a few hours would suffice to overcome visual difficulties which now defeat the ingenuity of the teacher and at best absorb weeks and months of time and effort.

Bacon said that it is unwise to exalt the powers of the human mind when we should seek out its true helps. There are many to-day who would have us exalt the minds of leaders with supposedly superior gifts. The task of educationists must be to emphasise the new helps which science has brought to the understanding of the common man. Distrust of education and a pessimistic attitude towards the powers of the average citizen in our generation are the seeds of fascism and war. If the cost of one cruiser were applied to providing projectors for our schools and the expense of two battleships were devoted to the production of films for the teaching of science, this generation could witness a greater advance of human enlightenment than the world has yet seen. This is national ground for hopefulness in the dark hours through which Europe is now passing.

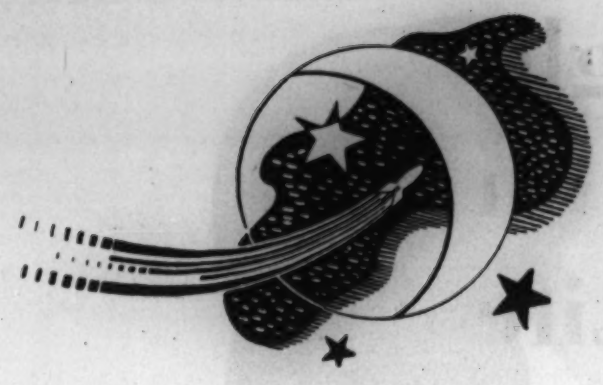
FIGHTING

"Twenty-five stations have been set up by universities and similar bodies."

AMERICAN BROADCASTING is so different from ours that it is not easy to draw any sort of parallel. There are seven hundred stations: a proportion of them are linked into the two great networks, but most of the seven hundred are independent and small, and have only a local range. Some sort of central control of them is exercised by a Federal Commission, but the protection of public interests which this body affords is seemingly of a negative kind, and the Commission does not seem to have the right to appropriate radio-time (which in America belongs to whoever can pay most for it) for such non-commercial projects as education. Presumably the government could *buy* time for education from the stations, but it is easy to see that there simply would not be enough money to pay for it. For while a newspaper, for instance, can be enlarged under advertising pressure to almost any size, no amount of pressure or petition can extend broadcasting hours beyond the natural limit of 24 per day. Thus competition simply forces the prices up, for there is nothing else that it can increase. Again, while almost any educational body can afford to start its own press-organ, only the wealthiest can afford to start new broadcasting stations.

Even so, twenty-five stations have been set up by universities and similar bodies, and although they are poorly equipped and understaffed they have managed to do good work in child study and in the study of broadcasting technique. But the great majority of education bodies (civic groups, women's clubs, farmers, workers, religious groups) have to beg time from their local station, and content themselves with whatever old unsold periods the stations can throw to them when the advertisers' demands have been met.

Since the advertisers choose their own programme and base them on mass-appeal, it is easy to see that the whole system places the cultural minorities completely at the mercy of the majority in the matter of broadcast material. This is so far from being true in Britain, that the



FOR AIR—*RADIO PROBLEMS IN AMERICA*

"But the majority of education bodies have to beg time from their local station, and content themselves with whatever unsold periods the stations can throw to them when the advertisers' demands have been met."

B.B.C. is constantly being accused of catering for the select few and neglecting the multitudes.

A fair amount of the material broadcast in America, nevertheless, appears to be of considerable educational value. Controversial discussion (unrehearsed), running commentary, actuality broadcasts, news, physical instruction, cookery talks, fall into the category of educational material which has massappeal, andthe Americans are proud of the way they present such matters. It is specific educational projects, adult and school which have the minority appeal and are consequently shouldered out of the air.

Dissatisfied with the stream of entertainment (vaudeville, serial play, symphony concert, recital, etc.) eighteen national groups of social workers have had a conference, attempting to find a way of getting education its rightful share of radio time. This conference was held in co-operation with the United States Office of Education, and is reported by Keith Tyler, of the Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University.

Federal assistance

Up till now they have had their hands full with this problem, which is still unsolved, and likely to remain unsolved. To help them they have the services of a Federal Committee made up from two Government departments, Education and Communications. This body has embarked upon a "long-term programme" to try to find a way of "getting Education its place on the air." The difficulties are recognised as well-nigh insurmountable.

Similarly though two great national education groups have succeeded in keeping a "You and Your Government" series on the network for years, it has been very difficult, because of time-shifts and uncertainties in programmes. Naturally when a station has to sell its time, it makes room for later purchasers of time by transferring non-paying broadcasters to other hours, or cutting them out altogether. This constant chopping and changing of available hours makes it quite impossible to organise anything like a national service of educational material. The most that educationists dare hope is that they may use up all the odd periods available by making records of educational material and distributing them to stations for use at odd times. The major problem of getting a real share of the time remains unsolved.

Even if it were solved, the problem of presentation would remain, for the stations would have to leave it to the educators. With some optimism the educators are addressing themselves to their task and arranging exchange of technical suggestions.

Financial pressure

The conclusion reached by the conference is that the radio has great educational possibilities, but that under the pressure of financial concerns it is almost impossible to hope that radio will be used in America for educational ends. Nevertheless, they "are resolved."

Of course, there is another side to the story. The broadcasting stations have their point of view. It must not be thought that all the programme-time is sold to advertisers. It seems indeed that only about 25 per cent of radio time is actually taken up with advertising programmes. The remaining 75 per cent of the time is filled by the companies themselves, who are concerned with keeping their stations on the air at as low a cost as is consistent with good entertainment, and at the same time broadcasting material which in their view is likely to attract advertisers to sponsor this or that attractive item or hour. And we must not assume that all the material so broadcast is low-brow, raucous, blaring, or otherwise offensive to the refined listener.

Indeed the big networks have their own education departments. These are concerned with the broadcasting of lectures and talks of an instructive nature, miscellaneous and heterogeneous, rather than the presentation of a definitely planned and rounded schedule, at definite hours of the day. At the same time the more responsible companies no doubt have their own conception of what radio-education ought to be, a conception which, we may guess, combines wide appeal with brightness or stunt-interest, so as to merit the term education and yet attract possible sponsors.

In their somewhat difficult task they find themselves set upon at all points by sectional interests which covet the radio time so used, and it seems to the companies that a good many of the clubs and societies which press upon them are log-rollers and axe-grinders who want radio time for what they choose to call education, but what is really nothing more than commercial advertising of an indirect nature. It is easy to see that in many instances the companies may do well to fight shy of such pressure. Add to the financial complications the fact that a fair proportion of these clubs and societies are cranks, composed of people who have too little to do in the afternoons, and set about the reforming the world. So they appear to the companies at any rate, who are disposed to blame home labour-saving devices for most of their troubles, for such devices set women free to form clubs and sob-sister-societies, and to badger innocent radio companies for free time for their unspeakably silly projects. Fortunately for the radio interests, the multifarious societies and clubs cancel each other out to some extent, and can be played off against one another; in any case their attack on the radio companies only now begins to show signs of organised unanimity.

So on the one hand, according to the sob-sisters we have the bad barons of radio, closely affiliated to the big-business interests, making radio the servant of Mammon, wickedly resenting and resisting any attempt to bring sweetness and light into American homes.

On the other hand, according to the radio companies, we have a heterogeneous collection of faddists and cranks constantly pestering hard-working radio officials with so-called educational projects which at worst are underhand attempts to steal radio time for commercial use, and at best are just scatterbrained attempts to broadcast a lot of flapdoodle, boloney, applesauce, and other American specialties.

Quite probably both views are correct.

Searchlight on Life

The films of Gaumont-British Instructional

NOBODY OF MY acquaintance has ever seen a Gaumont-British Instructional Nature study without being at the same time impressed and delighted. It is not the technical qualities of the film, the sumptuous photography and rich pictorial effect, the lucid and well-planned exposition and commentary, that make the appeal. It is the intrinsic value of the subject matter; the light shed by the film upon something that is real, often commonplace indeed, as in *Earthworms*, something that we see every day, something so obvious that we pass it by; or in other cases, something so infinitely large or small that human eyes cannot see it; but real, true, authentic, and exposed or expounded in such a way as to bring out all its fascinating interest.

Any librarian of books will testify that to-day there is a growing public for non-fiction. It is obvious from the success of certain documentaries and interest films the public for non-fiction films is also growing. The birth of this type of film was long delayed and its progress has been slow, on account of conditions peculiar to the cinema art and industry, but it is clear that an acceleration is ahead. It is just at this point, then, that the services of a unit like G.B.I. are most valuable. This review is a tribute to their invaluable services rendered and promised, for they have not only succeeded in building up an impressive library of which the Secrets of Life series is only a part, but have undertaken further commitments of an even more impressive order. The G.B.I. film library is wide in its range and varied in its subject matter and treatment, but the G.B.I. staff persist in regarding it merely as a nucleus.

The geography films, for instance, number 25 reels on British Regional Geography alone, with further films on the geography of the West Indies and India. The talking film can show and describe anything which can be shown and described; and a good non-fiction film has the quality of permanence in two senses of the word: not only will it keep for all time, but it will interest for all time. Fully alive to these considerations, G.B.I. regard their medium as an instrument not only for art and instruction, but also for recording, and they project an Empire Film Survey

"Fish Face"

which will include all the British Dominions, India, and Great Britain. So far as they have gone, they have shown how the world can be brought into the theatre and the classroom.

The Natural History series at present runs to more than 50 subjects. The latest ones, supervised by Dr. Julian Huxley and Mr. Hewer, are achievements in exposition. *Earthworm* is already in a fair way to become a classic. The earlier ones which have been round the theatres are remembered with pleasure, mixed with regret, as far as my acquaintances are concerned, that we have not seen more of them, and oftener. They are, for the most part, available in two forms; popular or purely instructional; or, as some would say, easy or hard. This policy of making a theatre version is a wise one for the material is too valuable, in many cases too beautiful, to be cast exclusively in text-book form. Further adventures in knowledge and interest are promised us.

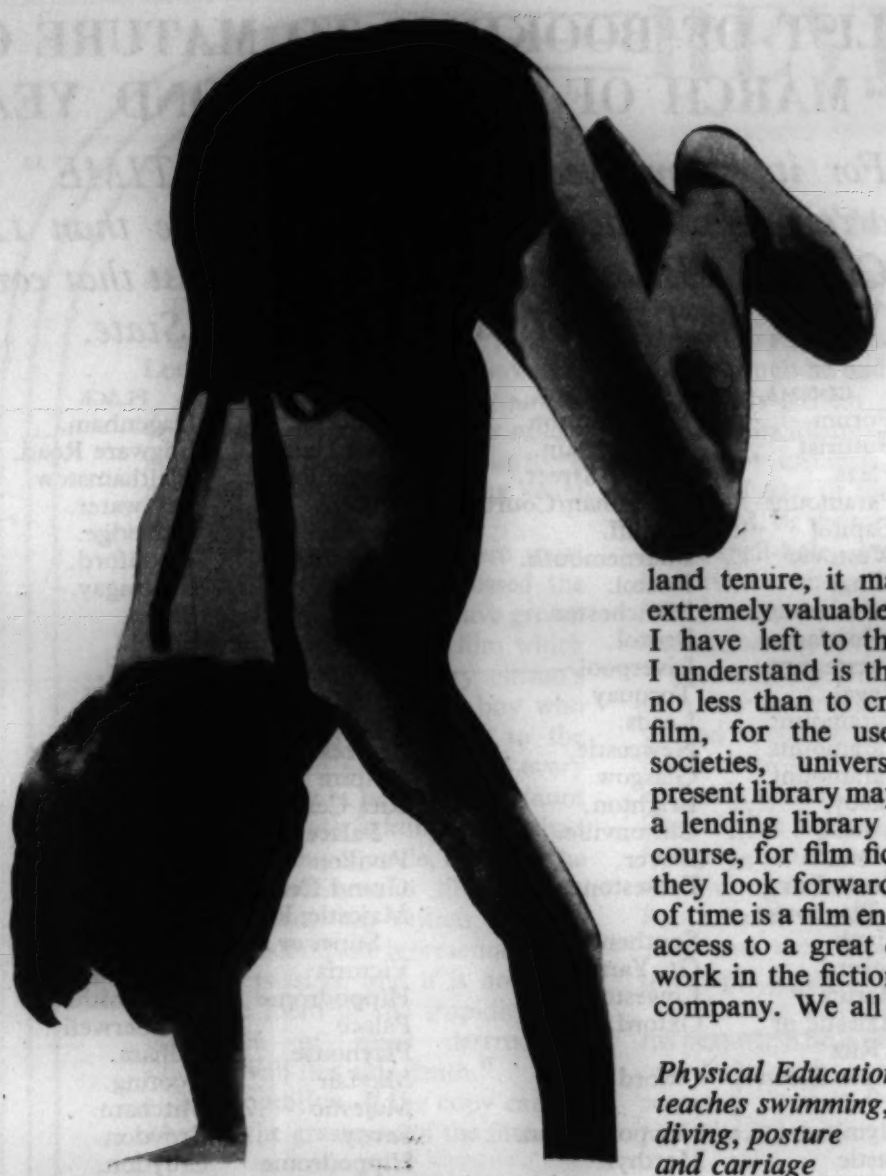
Physical training and sport form another section. Nine films on swimming and diving, and a whole series on physical training designed for the use of teachers with valuable work on posture and carriage. The work is being continued on a big scale in collaboration with physical training organisations throughout the country.

Only a beginning has been made with agricultural films, but the quality of the work in this, as in all other sections is such that the films would be welcome in any programme, in the schools and in the theatres alike.

Some of the most interesting experimental work of G.B.I. is in the field of history. G.B.I.'s use of diagrams in history and

"Ship Yard"

Adventures in Life, Nature and Knowledge



geography is something new and exciting. The examples here shown scarcely illustrate more than the plain diagram value of each: but cinematically treated, diagrams can come to life; arrows change position in strict unison with the commentary, hatching and shading appears and disappears just at the right moment. Labels, names, are used with such skill that diagrams tell the eye as much as the commentary tells the ear. In *Earthworm* and *Sea-Urchin*, there are sequences in which the diagrammatic and the photographic views are presented simultaneously on symmetrical halves of the subject, a device which I believe is as novel as it is obviously useful. To return to history, six subjects, or episodes in production, for experimental treatment on diagram lines. Two are completed—the *Expansion of Germany after* 1870, and *The Growth of British Railways*.

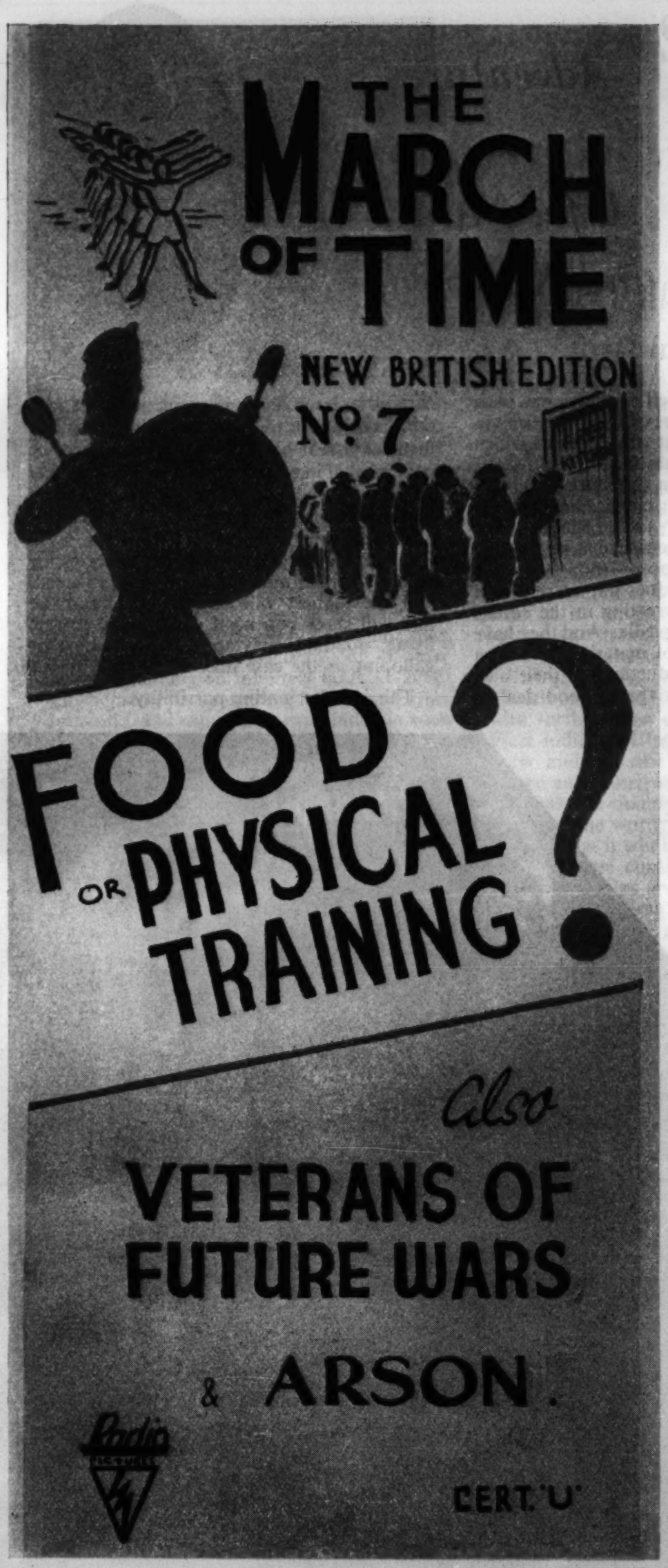
The most illuminating historical work they have yet done is a beautiful exposition of the mediæval three-fold system, *as it survives to-day* in rural England. This piece of work struck me as a *tour de force*; quite revolutionary in History teaching.

Mediæval Village gives a welcome shock by showing the past existing in the present. If G.B.I. can tackle other institutions in the same way as in the brilliant little essay on land tenure, it may well found a new and extremely valuable series of social criticisms. I have left to the last the project which I understand is the ambition of G.B.I. It is no less than to create a reference library of film, for the use of schools and lecture societies, universities and colleges. The present library may be regarded as resembling a lending library of books—(non-fiction, of course, for film fiction does not keep). What they look forward to creating in the course of time is a film encyclopædia. And they have access to a great deal of material for such a work in the fiction productions of their own company. We all know that a good deal of careful research and reconstruction goes into the making of a responsible fiction film. For instance a real harpsichord, or amphora, or coat of mail may well be seen in a completely false and ephemeral story. So the time may come when you will be able to ring up G.B.I. and ask them to send you a burnous, or a Chinese mandarin, or a viol de gamboys, or an early Italian music box, or an Arab steed, and the request will be answered, and the film will show you what you wanted to see, flying, nodding, playing, talking, ticking or galloping as the case may be.

This is a fascinating possibility.

Physical Education (left) teaches swimming, diving, posture and carriage

"Earthworm" (right) reveals miracles in the commonplace



LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH

'All Quiet' Re-issued—Review of the Month

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT. (Revival.) (Lewis Milestone—Universal.)
Louis Wolheim, Lew Ayres, John Wray.

All Quiet on the Western Front is one of the greatest films ever made, and one that has lost little of its force or stark eloquence in the six years since it first appeared.

Its revival is timely, There must be many thousands who missed the original showing, or who have grown to maturity since. It is a film which ought to be part of every citizen's mental heritage—of every boy who finds his pulses responding to the throb of drum and bugle, of every girl who has it in her power to taunt her menfolk into fighting. More than any other film yet made, it shows the complete futility and filth of war. It is, as a critic has written, "for the people the complete representation of the war passion, and if it does not convince them of the stupidity and cowardice of mass destruction, nothing will this side death."

The condition of the copy cannot obscure the greatness of the film.

Maxwell Anderson, who has since written *Winterset**, possibly the finest play of the contemporary stage, was responsible for the scenario, and although he had to deal with an episode and graphically-written work, he has given the scattered incidents—the incident of Kemmerich's boots, for instance, of the dialogue about the causes of war, or the scene with the coffin in the graveyard, or the scene with the dying Frenchman in the shell-hole—he has given all these their due importance, and yet kept the main design of the film moving from the first shot to the last "with one increasing purpose."

From the opening scenes of the schoolroom—with the schoolmaster mouthing the same old wicked words we can still hear about us to-day—it moves through the great scenes of bombardment and attack, of reaction, disillusion, comradeship, loss, to that poignant ending (marred only by the following ghost images that Laemmle foisted on the film against Milestone's will), where we see Paul's hand reaching out for the butterfly in the sun, and the sniper taking aim through his telescopic sights.

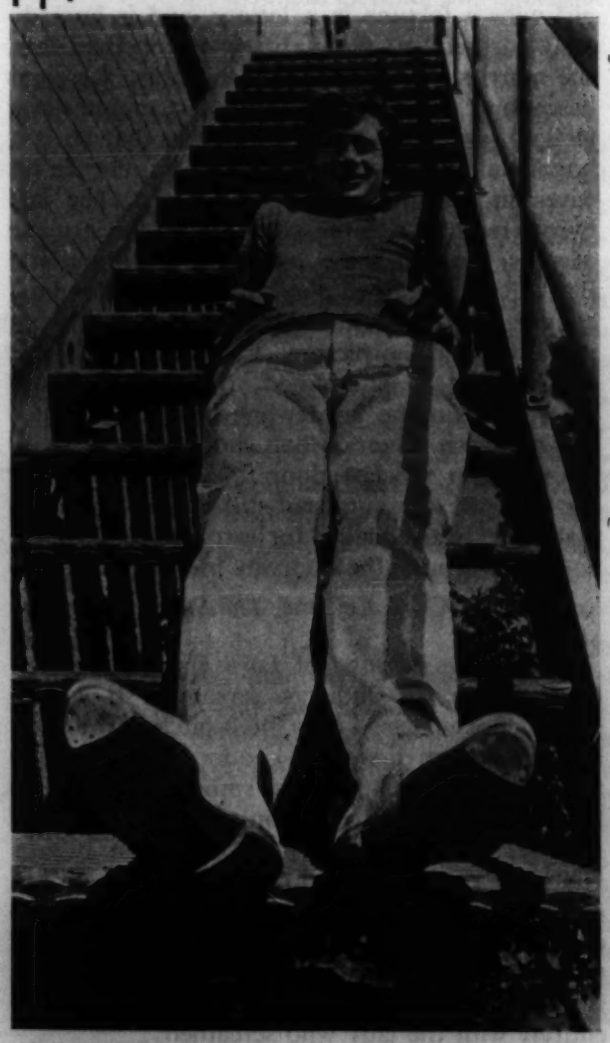
Milestone, as Paul Rotha has pointed out, is at his best when he is dealing in terms of pure cinema and building suspense by his cutting, as in this sequence. It is in the direction of the players—and the miscasting of some of them, such as Beryl Mercer—that the weaknesses of the film may be found.

Cinematically, the peak of the film is the first French attack. If any young man wants to be a film director, let him see this film every night this week and analyse that sequence shot by shot—the overhead tracking shot down the German trench, the view of No-Man's Land through which the attack will come, the Germans waiting expectant, the French appearing through the smoke, the camera tracking with them, cutting back to the Germans still waiting.

The cutting grows faster and faster. The suspense is terrific. A German machine-gun opens fire and mows down the advancing troops. The camera follows its arc of death from left to right across the screen. Shot is piled on vivid shot. And then the counter-attack—the camera movements all reversed (even the machine-gun, manned by the French, now swivelling right to left), so that the relationship between French and Germans is always perfectly clear—"quite unconsciously to the audience, but definitely calculated by Milestone," says Rotha, "the conflict between the two sides is expressed by the movement of the camera."

—Frank Evans,
The Newcastle Evening Chronicle

**See reviews on next page.*



"Born to Dance"

BORN TO DANCE. (Roy Del Ruth—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)
Eleanor Powell, James Stewart, Virginia Bruce, Una Merkel, Sid Silvers.

Born to Dance is a glittering, swift and riotous musical show, packed with all Hollywood's lavishness, culminating in a preposterous super-finale aboard a battleship. Sailors ashore at night-clubs make love, dodge discipline and fall in love at short notice; and Eleanor Powell heads the cast with her astonishing stepping. Miss Powell has my unstinted admiration, but after ten minutes of her pedal agility I feel inclined to say: "Yes, that's all right; I'll admit you're the world's greatest tap dancer, even if you do keep your mouth open so much. How about a little wit?" For the humour is not in the dialogue, and the romance is pretty crude. The pace and sweep of the whole thing carries it along to its hectic success. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

There couldn't be any film better suited to cheer you than *Born to Dance*. Personally I had such a good time at it that I can imagine myself, palsied and ancient, looking back upon it with the same sort of sentimental regard which I have now for that great show of years ago—a mere stage production, of course—called *Funny Face*. I am inclined to think that this *Born to Dance* is fated to some such high place in the annals. There isn't anything eccentric, reticent, or experimental about this film. Hollywood has used its pet tricks and has let itself go in the way it likes to in the matter of colossal sets and lots of people and lots of noise. But the thing isn't just big; it indicates wisdom and some sort of discretion.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

W.F.N. SELECTION

Zéro de Conduite	* * *
All Quiet on the Western Front	* *
Winterset	* *
Born to Dance	* *
Sabotage	* *
Windbag the Sailor	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

All Quiet on the Western Front
Born to Dance
The Charge of the Light Brigade
Winterset
Go West, Young Man
Love From a Stranger
The Garden of Allah
Windbag the Sailor
The Country Cousin
Sabotage
Land Without Music
Zéro de Conduite
Fear
Confetti
The Circus
La Tendre Ennemie

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE. (Michael Curtiz—Warner Brothers.)
Erroll Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Patric Knowles, Henry Stephenson, C. Henry Gordon.

Children who expect to see history accurately re-enacted should be warned beforehand that they are going to see nothing of the kind. They will, on the other hand, see a great deal of beautifully photographed, brilliantly directed, proudly characterised fiction—full of fine sentiment and fine sword-play, of courage under fire, bitter enmity under provocation, and sand under foot. They will, in the charge of the Six Hundred, see a military manœuvre more splendidly conceived than any I have witnessed on the screen. The glitter of lowered lances, the scudding thunder of hoof and heavy gun, the rally, the revenge, the silver mutiny of trumpets—all are sufficient to persuade the most ardent pacifist of war's undoubted glamour.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

The hypnotic effect is perfect. You find yourself saying each character's speeches just before he opens his mouth. It all follows and leads as beautifully, as comforting, as secure as logic, as certain as, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. It is as satisfying as *Bengal Lancers*, as faithful as *Under Two Flags*. You are willingly hypnotised, and each time the trance is deeper, because you have comfortably given up suspicion, you know the litany, you know the ritual will never be betrayed. That's the movie in its most essential form; it's just a punk picture and I like it.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

The more vigorous aspects of Warner's *The Charge of the Light Brigade* will be filmed in Mexico, whither a unit of the Michael Curtiz Company is scheduled to head from Hollywood next Sunday. The major shots of the famous charge have been made within fifty miles of the studio, but because of the anticipated injury and death rate among the animal chargers in the remaining sequences, it was deemed advisable to go to Mexico, where horseflesh is cheap and there is no American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. M.G.M. was compelled to resort to a similar departure in an animal picture last year.

—News item from *The New York Times*.

June 15th, 1936

WINTERSET. (Alfred Santell—RKO Radio.)
Burgess Meredith, Margo, Eduardo Ciannelli, John Carradine.

Just as a picture, *Winterset* is superb, a great, sombre pleasure. As a picture, the story is more effective than it was as a play, because this is exactly the thing that the movies can do on the grand scale. It's a beautiful piece of work. I think also that you can say that it's a beautiful piece of work in other ways, too. I suppose *Winterset* belongs to the category of underworld films. The public that wants its underworld films straight may be disappointed. Perhaps this film won't be a smash hit because it's so clearly a quality picture. Personally, if only for a change, I like a quality picture of low life, of killers, thieves, and such folk. The girl, Margo, is very good indeed, and the distraught judge, the various racketeers, with their guns and grey fedoras, the cops, the vagrants, the whole wretched crew, make a thorough picture, which you can call, in one of your lyric moods, a kind of popular folk poem of Manhattan underworld life.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

Winterset is a quest for truth, the determination of the son of a fearless liberal to prove his father innocent of the murder charge that sent him to his death years before. The cinema rationalises beautifully something that might otherwise have seemed oddly coincidental, the grouping of the central characters—bitter, vengeful Estrella; the hopeful, determined son, Mio, and the mentally over-wrought Judge Gaunt; variously motivated, but each anxiously seeking out the harried Garth Esdras, identified by witnesses as the driver of the murder car but never brought to testify, in that squalid dead end in the shadow of Brooklyn Bridge.

—J. T. M., *The New York Times*

"The Charge of the Light Brigade"

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN. (Henry Hathaway—Paramount.)
Mae West, Warren William, Randolph Scott.

Go West, Young Man marks the end of Mae West, Young Woman. She plays the part of a movie star whose car breaks down while she is making a "personal appearance" tour, and so finds herself in a village where she vamps a nice young man. Her hips swing as much as ever—"The Swing's the Thing" she seems to think, still—and she ogles and entices and vamps and seduces. But it is now out of date. Mae West belongs to the year 1935. Filmland has a new queen now. Her name is Shirley Temple.

—Hannen Swaffer, *The People*

It's a little sad about Mae West.

She came in with such a glorious swagger. Every line was whiplash, every glance from under those heavy lids a shaft of lightning. She was such fun. Pretending to represent flaming sex, she actually presented a devastatingly satirical comment on it.

But what a strain it has been to sustain that attitude.

This time she has taken a successful play, *Personal Appearance*, which satirises a film star, puffed up with publicity and with a vamping complex. There are moments of the old Mae, but not nearly enough. The strain has told on her. She must now make another *She Done Him Wrong*. Or else . . .

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

LOVE FROM A STRANGER. (Rowland V. Lee—Trafalgar Films.)
Ann Harding, Basil Rathbone, Binnie Hale.

The story is the sort of straight, unshaded thing that the films do well. A young business girl wins a fortune in a lottery, and is immediately pursued by a fascinating stranger. Foolishly, she marries him. Even more foolishly, she signs her money over to him. At the last minute, in a locked, lonely house, she discovers that he is a homicidal maniac, whose fancy is to murder his wives in a photographic dark room. The last twenty minutes is entirely devoted to the struggle of wits between these two. Ann Harding and Basil Rathbone overplay a little in the final conflict, but I'm not at all sure that it isn't what is wanted for the picture. The whole treatment of the climax is strained, overwrought, and hysterical; on the border-line between laughter and madness. There is one shot, when the wife throws open the last door to escape and finds her husband standing dead-still on the threshold, that hasn't been equalled for horror since Cagney's body fell through the doorway in *Public Enemy*.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

During the showing of *Love From a Stranger* a woman in the audience screamed! It wasn't just a choked gasp, or a high-pitched indrawn breath—but an honest-to-goodness yell of pure terror. And it was the most spontaneous tribute I have ever heard to the sinister personality of Basil Rathbone. It is Mr. Rathbone's film. . . . His study of the boastful maniac—urging on his passions with wild music, declaiming how much of a genius he is, then shaking with wild terror at the thought that the tables have at last been turned, is an amazing piece of acting. My sympathies are entirely with the lady who screamed.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

THE GARDEN OF ALLAH. (Richard Boleslawsky—Selznick International.)

Marlene Dietrich, Charles Boyer, Basil Rathbone, Tilly Losch, C. Aubrey Smith.

The warmth of the colouring is not sufficient compensation for the gloom of the story. One feels that the Trappist monk and the woman are an ill-matched couple and that it is just as well for both of them that he agrees to go back quietly to his cell. One thing is certain and that is that Technicolor has never been better utilised than to bring out the chromes and browns and distant blues of desert scenery and the vivid tints of sunsets. This is the most successful effort in colour photography yet produced. When Tilly Losch dances in the Arab café, trailing her multi-coloured skirts, twirling her white, crimson-nailed hands, one feels that half the effect would be lost in black-and-white. And yet I do not think that the colour adds to the perfect screen beauty of Miss Dietrich ; that alabaster countenance seems sometimes to be cheapened by its pinkish tints.

—Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

"This is the land of fire," says the local Catholic priest, "and you are a woman of fire." Nobody talks less apocalyptically than that: the great abstractions come whistling hoarsely out in Miss Dietrich's stylised, weary, and monotonous whisper, among the hideous technicolour flowers, the yellow cratered desert like Gruyére cheese, the beige faces. Startling sunsets bloom behind silhouetted camels very much as in the gaudy little pictures which used to be on sale on the pavements of Trafalgar Square. Alas! my poor Church, so picturesque, so noble, so superhumanly pious, so intensely dramatic. I really prefer the *New Statesman* view, shabby priests counting pesetas on their fingers in dingy cafés before blessing tanks.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

WINDBAG THE SAILOR. (William Beaudine—Gainsborough.)

Will Hay, Moore Marriott, Graham Moffat.

Will Hay takes his precarious pince-nez to sea, and the result is a rollicking parody of all sea sagas from the Bounty to the Girl Pat. As Captain Ben Cutlet, bar-corner salt with a somewhat inadequate canal-barge experience, Will Hay has got himself a grand new character. He sails the seas on imagination and old ale until the local gentry hear of his exploits. A lecture to the Sea Scouts leads to the command of a vessel, and then we're off—with part of the pier following. There is a mutiny in the best Bligh manner, adventures on a cannibal island, a neat piece of salvage, and a triumphant return, laced with good, hearty laughs and, for a welcome change, bright dialogue. What's more, there isn't a woman in it. —Guy Morgan, *The Daily Express*

The melancholy fact about many British comedies is that one leaves them with hope deferred. Will Hay has some excellent screen appearances to his credit. But will he ever, this side of Hollywood, get a film adequate to his most personal style, in which he will feel inspired with the spontaneity which is the life of comedy? *Windbag the Sailor* doesn't come within a thousand miles of inspiring him. It very nearly missed making me laugh . . . but one laugh in an hour is good hunting, I suppose, if you put it against the background of these arid days. How great is the need for a new universal figure of comedy on the screen!

—*The Birmingham Mail*

THE COUNTRY COUSIN. (Walt Disney.)

Though Mr. Disney shows no sign of returning to his earlier and more lyrical manner, *Country Cousin* is extremely funny, and recounts the adventures of a country mouse who is entertained so lavishly by his sophisticated town friends that he soon becomes inebriated and gratuitously insults a sleeping cat by treating him as though he were a football. Mr. Disney's wealth and ingenuity of detail is always there to redeem even the most commonplace of his inventions, and *Country Cousin*, while rich in detail and fertile in invention, breaks no fresh ground.

—*The Times*

SABOTAGE. (Alfred Hitchcock—Gaumont-British.)

Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, John Loder, Desmond Tester.

Alfred Hitchcock has his faults, but amongst his many admirable qualities is this: he has style. Ninety-nine pictures out of a hundred might have been made by anybody. But not Hitchcock's. His work is as unmistakable as Alexander Korda's, or Lubitsch's or René Clair's. His range, in atmosphere and characterisation and theme, is not very wide, but in his own field he is supreme. His setting is London, his characters are the Cockneys he has studied with such a shrewd and penetrating eye, his theme is the capacity for deeds of darkness and of horror that lie beneath the commonplace London life. Hitchcock's gift of the macabre gives point and distinction to his latest (and in many ways best) picture, *Sabotage*. Its very excellence and integrity may go against it at the box-office. The story is grim, the main situation—where a boy is asked to deliver an infernal machine at an underground station, is delayed en route and blown to smithereens with the rest of the passengers on the bus—is carried through to its logical, horrifying end. This, though the climax, is only one of a dozen situations charged with menace and smiling horror.

—George Campbell, *The Bystander*

Sabotage is the cleverest picture Alfred Hitchcock has made since the arrival of talkies. It is also, to me, the least likeable of them all. It is a cold, calculated, and quite masterly piece of film technics, designed to raise suspense and horror to the highest frequency. I am prepared to give it every honour in the academy so long as I am never asked to sit through it again. This is, I grant you, a brilliant piece of horrification. The scene with the boy in the bus is superbly timed. But I believe—and I stick to it—that there is a code in this sort of free-handed slaughter, and Hitchcock has gone outside the code in *Sabotage*. As a detective fan and an inveterate reader of thrillers I suggest that this is the sort of thing that should get a fellow blackballed from the Crime Club. Discreet directors don't kill schoolboys and dogs in omnibuses. Believe me, it isn't done.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

"The Garden of Allah"

LAND WITHOUT MUSIC. (Walter Forde—Capitol.)

Richard Tauber, Diana Napier, Schnozzle Durante.

The new musical fantasy, *Land Without Music*, contradicts its title most heartily and pleasantly withal, for the picture fairly hums with melody, as behoves a Tauber vehicle. It finds its subject in an old legend and its settings in the little Italian Duchy of Lucco, whose inhabitants are all of them music-mad. The sheep stray into the cornfields, the horses go unshod whilst the blacksmith mends bugles, and the Minister of Finance tootles on a flute, regardless of a heavy debt to Austria and a non-existent revenue. The Prince Regent meets the situation by banning all music from the State, and it is Richard Tauber's task to stir the people with his golden voice to a bloodless and melodious revolution. It is, indeed, a rejuvenated Tauber who restores harmony to Lucco, soothes the savage breasts of brigands, and finally wins the favour of a very gracious Princess in the person of Diana Napier.

—Michael Orme, *The Sketch*

Continental Films

ZÉRO DE CONDUITE. (NOUGHT FOR CONDUCT.) (Jean Vigo—Independent.)

Any film which asks that the critic shall not leave his brains at the box-office is likely to get an identical response from the high-brow gossip peddler and the low-brow variety. So it was not surprising that the *Observer* and the *Evening Standard* concealed their confusion at this film with exactly the same wisecrack ("Nought for behaviour, nought for direction . . ."). No less maudlin is the atmosphere in which Vigo's work is being shown at Hampstead, making a play for the naughty surrealist element and the *bourgeois enragé* at the same time. Criticism in this kind of weather becomes increasingly difficult.

First of all let it be said that the controversy over surrealism hardly enters into a discussion of *Zéro de Conduite*. There are few primarily surrealist passages, and those that exist are more akin to the dynamic symbolism of René Magritte than to any work of the more introspective surrealists (Eluard, Dali) to which certain critics have compared this film. There is no integration of the subconscious scene but an outspoken realism that is immeasurably more true than the routine adult conception of children and children's attitude to adults. Nor is *Zéro de Conduite* primarily satirical, as everyone appears to believe. It cries out with all the bitterness of the artist's heart at insincerity, evil and warped thinking. The impact of the cesspool mind of one of the "teachers" at the boarding-school where the story takes place is expressed by a sensitive child's shriek: "Le professeur est merde." And filthy he is, and the type of mind Vigo's argument is directed against.

Jean Vigo was born in prison, where his father was forced to commit suicide. Prejudice and bigotry drove this brilliant creative mind to its death at the age of twenty-nine. Surely now he is gone we can pay him the compliment of bringing to our appreciation of his film a little of the fair reception accorded to anything made amid vast technical resources at Denham? The Paris press show ended in a free fight. In London we merely sneer. If only you give the director a fair chance you will leave the Everyman as I did, boiling with hatred at all kinds of injustice, but mainly at the arty audience which mistakes a sincere and heroic treatment for fashionable comic satire.

—Roderic Papineau

FEAR. (V. Tourjansky—French.)
Charles Vanel, Gaby Morlay, Suzy Prim.

Fear is an odd matrimonial drama about an elderly Paris lawyer, who hires an actress to blackmail his young wife into admitting that she spent her holidays on the Riviera with a pug-faced pianist. His object in this strange escapade is not, apparently, legal redress, but the achievement of domestic purgation through pity and terror. Charles Vanel plays this tiresome old man, who even indites a lecture over his child's burnt rocking-horse, with all the evidences of grief and sincerity.

The film is from a story of Stefan Zweig's, and I suggest that a good working title would be *Fear: or Blackmailed into Bliss.*

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

"Confetti" with Hans Moser

CONFETTI. (Hubert Marischka—Austrian.)
Hans Moser, Leo Slezak, Friedl Czepa.

Confetti, after a bad opening, is not quite so devastatingly cheery as most Austrian films. It is true there are a good many balloons and paper streamers at the Carnival Ball (when will producers realise there is no more dismal sight for the outsider than that of others riotously and incomprehensibly enjoying themselves?) but the course of events which follow the presence there of a priggish and miserly professor, the proprietor of a big store who should have been elsewhere on business, and a girl from the dress department who has borrowed an exclusive model, becomes quite agreeably entangled. No film with Hans Moser and Leo Slezak could fail to have human as well as humorous moments.

—Graham Greene, *The Spectator*

THE CIRCUS. (Alexandrov—Mosfilm.)
See also W.F.N., JULY.

The Circus, Russia's newest film to be released in Europe and now showing in Paris, is on the face of it a miserable imitation of the kind of story film turned out in its dozens by almost every studio in the world.

The usual components are faithfully present. The boy, the girl, comic relief, trick artists, mobile scenery, fanfares of trumpets and "Les Girls" half-way to nudity. But the flavour is reminiscent of the films of 1910. The Boy, a true-blue Harold, is in love with The Girl, an American circus star, hounded from her own country and pathetically bewildered by The Villain, a German, cum moustachios, top hat and cloak, who has her morally in his clutches. The grand spectacles made possible by several circus performances, and the singing and dancing of the heroine, were so forcedly gay because so completely imitative, that the effect was only embarrassing.

But the strength and purpose of this film lay in the complete sincerity of the last 150 feet. It was then that the heroine's secret, her coloured baby, was revengefully disclosed by the villain during a circus show. Holding up the child triumphantly in his arms he waited for scorn and abuse. It did not come. Instead the little boy was taken from him and passed lovingly from group to group. So well directed was this scene that the child's gradual change from fear and subjection to confidence and freedom said more for racial equality than might months of oratorical propaganda.

Here is a story film, in many respects weak and immature, which is not content to offer simply escapist entertainment. Not to show how 5 per cent of the world live, but how 100 per cent of the world should live according to the Soviet ideal. And it was because a bourgeois French audience were encouraged to consider the possible betterment of future generations that they sat at the edge of their seats to applaud this film through the final fade-out.

—Louise Watt

LA TENDRE ENNEMIE. (Max Ophüls—Dutch.)

Max Ophüls handles his material with great skill. The ghosts' transparent figures, able to pass through walls or perch in chandeliers, become somewhat tedious, but the unfolding of the woman's life is full of delicacy and none the less moving for being satirical as well as sentimental. The film holds the attention and occasionally touches the emotions. But it is fundamentally a picture whose main function is to show how even a familiar and rather feeble story can be revivified by sophisticated direction.

—R. H., *Manchester Guardian*

THE MONEY MAKERS OF 1936

Vote among American and British Exhibitors gives best box-office stars.

Motion-Picture Herald poll shows Shirley Temple top for second season.

Shirley Temple—Tops!

American Exhibitors Choose—

Shirley Temple	First
Clark Gable	Second
Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers*	Third
Robert Taylor	Fourth
Joe E. Brown	Fifth
Dick Powell	Sixth
Joan Crawford	Seventh
Claudette Colbert	Eighth
Jeanette MacDonald	Ninth
Gary Cooper	Tenth

Sixth!

Jessie Matthews

Joan Crawford—Seventh
this year: fifth in 1935

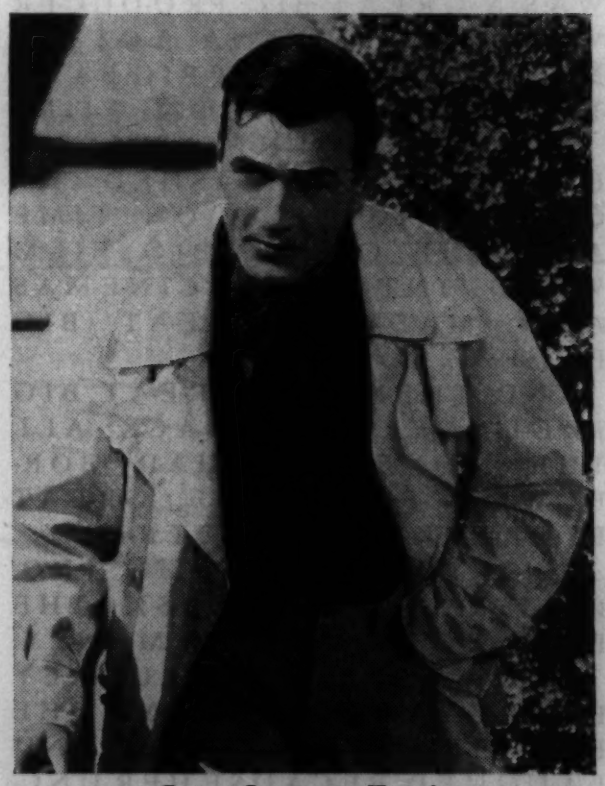
British Exhibitors Choose—

Shirley Temple	First
Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers*	Second
Gracie Fields	Third
Clark Gable	Fourth
Laurel and Hardy	Fifth
Jessie Matthews	Sixth
James Cagney	Seventh
Wallace Beery	Eighth
Greta Garbo	Ninth
Norma Shearer	Tenth

* Exhibitors listing Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers divided in reporting them as a team and as individuals, the majority, however, as a team.

George O'Brien—Western Star No. 2
Buck Jones topped both U.S.A. and British Exhibitors' lists. On the British list George O'Brien is fourth, with Ken Maynard and Tim McCoy second and third.

British Exhibitors' vote on British Stars box-office appeal places Gracie Fields first, Jessie Matthews third, Jack Hulbert fourth, George Formby fifth, Robert Donat sixth.



Gary Cooper—Tenth
in the 1936, he rises from thirty-first place in the 1935 poll

Eighth in British List
Wallace Beery does not appear in America's first ten.

America's Fourth
Robert Taylor was placed eighty-third in 1935

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I have only twice been to a cinema since 1920."—*The Archbishop of York.*

"As a rule, the cinema leaves me hearty and heart-free."—*C. A. Lejeune.*

"I've just done a script on the Coronation—a comedy of course."

Harry Langdon

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE TEST

(*Write on both sides of the paper only*).

1. Distinguish between *Shirley Temple Macpherson* and *Father Durante.*
2. On what noted occasions were the following songs written?—
   "I know a Lasky, a Bonnie, Bonnie Lasky."
   "Auprès de ma Fonda."
   "The Last Rotha of Summer."
   "Seated one Day at the Wurlitzer" (or "The Lost Korda").
   "Arliss, Where art Thou?"
   "The Wastrel Boy" (or "I know a Bank").
   "Hullabaloo, bela, Will Hay."
   "Schach, and Let's be Friends."
   "Where G.B. sucks, there suck I."
3. Have you ever been to a cinema?
4. Which (if any) of these famous film names make your heart thump—thump?—Garbo, Stanley Baldwin, G. A. Atkinson, Donald Duck, The March of Time, Denham.
5. "Kiss me Hardy"—Under what circumstances did Laurel make this remark?
6. Which would you rather do, take Mr. St. John Ervine to a movie, or stay at home and read Miss C. A. Lejeune? Or vice-versa?
7. What about Mae West?
8. Say quite simply and frankly (but if possible printably) what you think about the interior decorations of the average super-cinema.
9. If you have answered all the questions correctly, you are entitled to a conducted tour of the City by a well-known producer. If not, think yourself lucky.

JOLLY GOOD FUN, WHAT?

(*Extracts from Newsreel reviews in "To-Day's Cinema," January 15th.*)

"Prominent here are pictures of the manufacture of gas masks at Blackburn."

"Gas mask factory at Blackburn."

"Again gas mask manufacture occupies a prominent place."

"Further good pictures of the gas mask manufacture."

"The opening of the gas mask factory at Blackburn."

Anyhow, if there isn't a war, the Studios can buy them up.

A CYNIC TO HIS SON

You've got to be born in the business, my boy,
You've got to be one of the mob;
You must have relations
In high situations
To hold down a Studio job.
So just put away your diplomas,
Your brilliance is not worth a bob—
Unless your Aunt Jess is
In charge of the dresses
You won't get a Studio job—
There, there,
You won't get a Studio job.

You've got to be born in the business, my boy,
You won't serve a Studio term
Unless you're connected
With one who's directed
A number of flops for the firm.
You might make a Marion Crawford,
A Capra or Flaherty (Bob)
But unless you are born in
The game, you won't horn in—
You won't get a Studio job,
Don't cry,
You won't get a Studio job.

* * *

If Douglas Fairbanks Junior
Were anyone punior
He'd stay away from the fights
That are such a fragrant feature
of West End first nights.

* * *

DAVE ROBSON SAYS:—

A new problem confronted me recently when I was appointed technical adviser to the Eggshell-Mex Producers Association.

It was my business to increase egg production if possible to an average of three eggs per day from each hen.

An experience during the late war, when I noticed that hens and birds literally dropped their eggs at the sound of gun fire, led me to believe that sound waves in some form were responsible.

So I played everything from jazz to symphony into a rooster to obtain data, but without result.

After further research and study I resolved to write some music in a very low frequency range, some fowl music so foul that no fowl could resist the hip swing response to its beating rhythm.

In effect this noise toned up their vertical protuberant sinews' creating a semi-quaver movement in their harmonical gizzard with the nett result of three eggs per hen per eight-hour day.

By using ultra short waves I was able to obtain eggs boiled, poached, or fried, straight from the chicken, but it would require a combination of Bach's and Disney's symphonies plus a heavy bombardment to get them—scrambled!

Zero de Lejeune

One in the eye for Baldwin

"Alexander Korda, a producer whose name, in some curious way, has come in time to represent England."—*Z. D. Lejeune.*

AND

One in the eye for the Film Council

"The truth is that there is no production crisis in the industry."—*Z. D. Lejeune.*

AND

One in the eye for You and Me

"The film industry does not want money from the public . . . its finances are not our affair. We cannot understand them, and we have no business to interfere in them."

(*This programme comes to you by courtesy of the Happier Sunday League*).

W.F.N.'s aureole of birdseed is awarded this month to Lord Warwick for the following pronunciamento on Greta Garbo.

"She has been thirsty for knowledge, she has drunk deep, and the draught has transformed her."

* * *

FAERY STORY FOR THE TOTS

ON-CE UP-ON A TIME THE-RE WAS A GRE-AT BIG PRO-DUC-ER WHO WAS LENT A LOT OF MON-EY BY A GRE-AT BIG BANK TO MAKE A GREAT BIG FILM.

AND SO HE WENT IN-TO PRO-DUC-TION AND FIN-ISHED THE GRE-AT BIG FILM ON TIME AND THE GRE-AT BIG FILM WENT IN-TO THE CIN-E-MAS AND MADE A GRE-AT BIG PRO-FIT.

AND THEN THE GRE-AT BIG PRO-DUC-ER PAID BACK ALL THE MONEY HE HAD BOR-ROW-ED FROM THE GRE-AT BIG BANK, WITH INT-ER-EST.

AND THE GRE-AT BIG PRO-DUC-ER DID NOT ASK THE BANK FOR AN-Y MORE MON-EY.

AND WHEN LIT-TLE AUD-REY HEARD THIS STOR-Y SHE LAUGH-ED AND LAUGH-ED AND LAUGH-ED, BE-CAUSE HER UNC-LE HAD AL-READY TOLD HER A-BOUT THE MIL-LEN-I-UM.

LORUM

SNOOKS GREISER, W.F.N.'s cantankerous lift-boy, whisked several members of the Film Council down into the basement the other day.

Snooks: "I suppose you're patting each other's back about your analysis of British Film Finance, huh?"

Film Council (in chorus): "The council is an unbiased organisation formed to investigate and report on——"

Snooks: "So what? Maybe you'll turn your attention to the finances of W.F.N. next, huh?"

F.C. (in chorus): "The Council is an unbiased——"

Snooks: "——Or even the Film Council itself, huh? Third Floor, probes, quizzes, dirt, lowdown, inside stories and *World Film News*."

HOT NEWS

When the Hollywood Maestros want to concentrate—

Jean Harlow counts the cars that pass her home.
Thinks for the buggy ride.

* * *

Clarence Brown goes for long motor rides.
Round and round Miss Harlow's house please.

* * *

De Mille smokes a pipe.
It's called "Nero" and it's full of extras in togas.

* * *

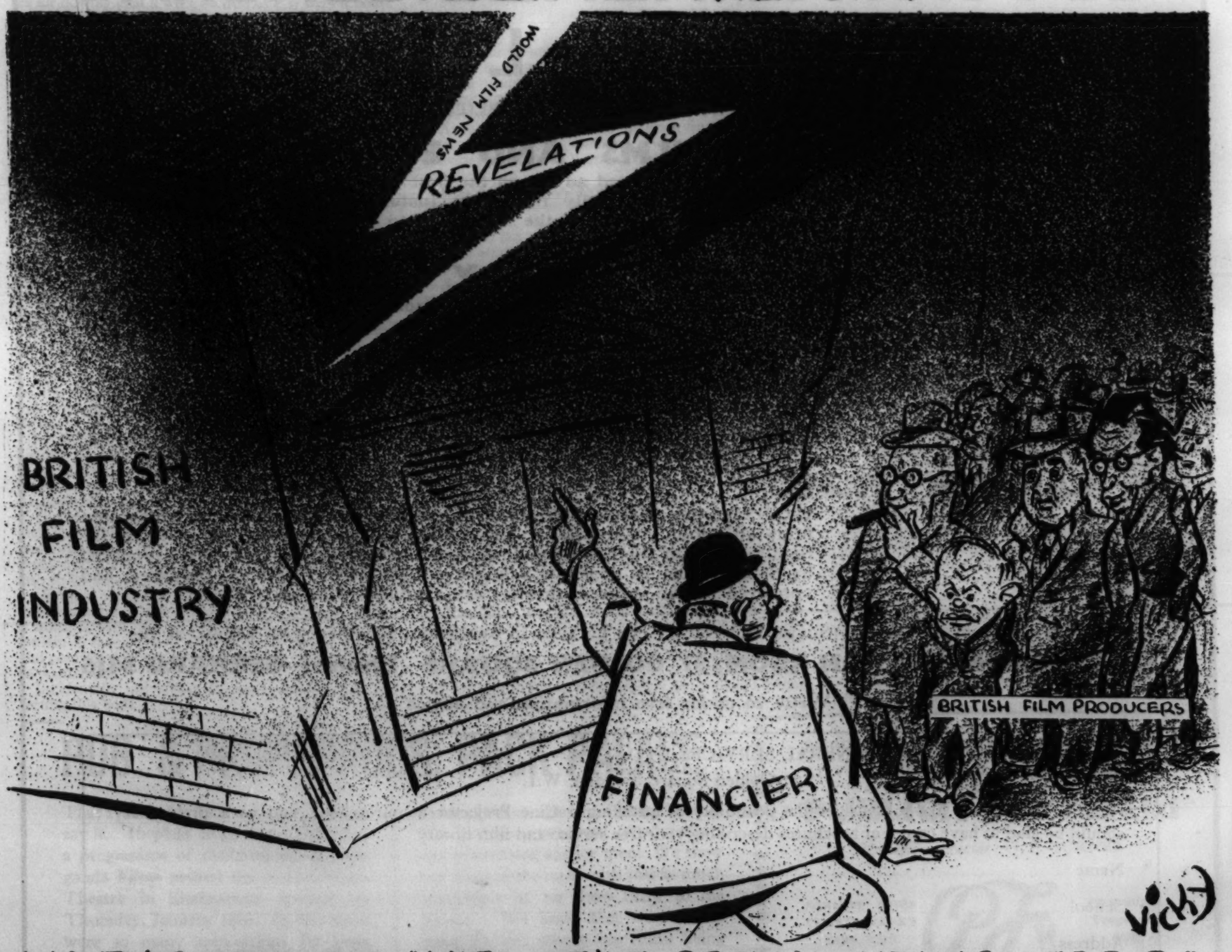
Clark Gable has a hot bath.
So what?

Surrealist Film Scenario, appropriately culled from the correspondence columns of the Times.

PUPPY PIE

Brigadier-General Wolley-Dod gives us one instance of a joke that the Eton boys had against the bargees in Victorian days. But there was a still older one in existence, for Stephen Terry, who was at Eton from 1787 to 1793, tells us that the bargees were on very good terms with the Eton boys generally, but did not like too often the old joke of stealing a donkey in the dark, taking it for a calf, finding that it had shoes on, and throwing it overboard. He adds that the bargemen used to join in this joke, when paid for (apparently in drinks), but not otherwise.

THUNDER IN THE CITY



"IS THIS THE BIG "HIT" WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR?"

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Brilliant Air Ministry Film on Flight–Theory

A technical training film of first importance has been sponsored by the Air Ministry and is taking an important part in the teaching of new recruits. The part so far made runs to five reels, each reel intended to accompany a lecture. At the end of the course, all five reels are run as a refresher. The length finally aimed at is fifteen reels.

The present film stands head and shoulders over other films of technical instruction. It is measured but not slow, clear but not too detailed, and makes use of all the technical possibilities of the modern cinema. Most remarkable are those sections using a technique developed by Doctor Townend, renowned aeronautical researchman. By his technique, movements of air are made visible. The principle is simple. Air at different temperatures has different optical densities. Rays of light passing through air of different optical densities are defracted to different degrees. The phenomenon is familiar to anyone who has looked at a landscape shimmering through the air rising off a hot road. By this process, one can actually see air flowing past a wing section as if it were a boat in water. The process is used to illustrate the elementary principles of flight, the effect of "slats," and what happens in a stall.

The film was prepared by B.T.H. Some of it was shot on the Western Electric highspeed camera at 2,400 pictures a second on 16mm.

The Air Ministry have forty-two sound 16mm. projectors in continuous use at their training centres. They contemplate buying further outfits, and must be one of the largest operators in this country.

Principles of Flying

WHY AEROPLANES FLY, by Arthur Elton and Robert Fairthorne (Longmans, Green, 2*s.* 6*d.*).

This is the first book of the new *March of Time* series, planned to give the public "a detached, simple, and untechnical explanation of the world we live in—its mechanics, its social organisation, its methods of Government."

Elton is already well-known for his lucid booklets on the Fluid Flywheel and Epicyclic Gear, and in this book he has collaborated with an aeronautical expert.

In the short space of 82 pages they present the history of man's attempt to fly, the principles of flight as we now know it, and a summing up of the present uses of the flying machine both for construction and destruction.

The book stands in the same relation to modern literature as the documentary film does to modern film production, and if this attempt at really simple explanation is to be regarded as experimental, it is also to be noted as a complete success.

Simple analogies to everyday themes, clearly-drawn diagrams and convincing photographs make it quite certain that no one can read the book and remain in ignorance of the principles behind the safe and comfortable passage of an airliner from Croydon to Austrialia.

Incidentally, all school teachers should insist on getting this book. C. M.

Steuart Films **A diagram 'Set'**

Moving Lines

by Ronald Steuart

It is surprising how few people realise that a cartoon camera can be used for anything but the making of entertainment films. To a great number, the diagram film is unheard of, yet this type of picture is an excellent method of teaching.

As a teaching film, the diagram cartoon is not confined to schools, but has a wider application in Industry, though at present, little has been done in this field.

It is, for instance, an excellent way of illustrating the efficiency of an organisation run under scientific management, by showing with the aid of moving diagrams, the co-relation of operations and departmental routine, resulting in the rhythmic balance of production and output relative to sales creation.

Again, a moving diagram can show far more clearly than any book, the working of various machines, since it can portray slowly, very rapid movements, or show one movement disassociated from the remainder.

There are certain fundamentals which must be followed.

First, it must be remembered that the film is for the student, and not for the teacher.

The treatment of each stage must therefore be slow, and to the point; each section must be treated fully, and presented to the student, so that he does not have to think what is meant, but see it immediately.

While a certain point is being shown, there must be nothing on the screen to detract the attention. Clever tricks and photographic gymnastics are out of place in a teaching film, especially in a diagram cartoon. A very grave and often a too common fault is having too many moving lines on the screen at once. While, to the expert, all is so easy, to the unitiated the effect is confusing.

Secondly, the film should not contain too much subject-matter; rather split it into two or even three parts. I have seen a ten-minutes film embrace what was for me nearly a whole term's work, and although I knew a certain amount on the subject, it took me all my time to follow it thoroughly. How glad I am that I was not being introduced to the subject!

News Review

Experiments in the making of films for Africans which have been carried out in E. Africa by the Social and Industrial Research Department of the International Missionary Council, have so much impressed the Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda Governments that they have contributed £1,000 for the supply of a series of films for their own use and for the provision of cinema units for displaying them.

Mr. G. C. Latham, one of the Directors of the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment, says : "The series we shall now make specially for the East African Governments will be instructional films dealing with such subjects as cotton growing, seed selection, the curing of hides and skins, the improvement of village water supplies, the grading of agricultural produce, anti tse-tse fly measures and so on. The actors in all our films are Africans, and Africans have been trained to do some of the technical work, of shooting, production and exhibition too."

The Colonial Development Fund has made a grant of £1,500 for the continuance of the Experiment, while the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which originally made the Experiment possible, has granted a further £1,000.

* * *

That continental governments are fast realising the power of films as a means of propaganda, was pointed out by Curl Belling, chief of Nazi Film propaganda, in a recent review. In the majority of the continental countries independent film production has completely vanished, and has given way to State-controlled or State-subsidised companies, producing films to "serve the interests of the State," and to include incidents, personalities, or ideas which the respective governments consider desirable for moulding public opinion.

Italy exercises stringent control over film production, and in Poland it is censored and controlled by the Film Chamber. In both Germany and France independent producers do exist, but a strong censorship is applied to prevent tendencies not in line with the government's policy.

* * *

At a recent meeting of the Kine Section of the Royal Photographic Society a programme of sub-standard sound films was followed by a talk by Mr. H. R. Parsons, of Winads, on trailer production, and included a description of the Multi-scene process, by which the illusion of a line of dancers is produced by a multiplicity of reflections of a single girl.

On February 22nd, a selection of films accepted in the recent Sub-standard Film Competition will be shown. This will be followed by a demonstration of the R.C.A. ultra-violet recording system. On March 18th, H. Chevalier, of the Denham studios, will give a paper on trick work and special effects.

Admission of non-members to R.P.S. meetings is by invitation of a member, or by ticket obtainable from the Secretary, 35 Russell Square, W.C.1.

The Kine Section of the Society caters for amateurs as well as professionals.

PUB. & PROP. PRODS. PACK PALACE

That's how America's *Variety* would say it. In plain English it means that a programme of Publicity and Propaganda Films packed the roomy Palace Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue on Thursday, January 14th. In fact there were so many applications for seats that a repeat performance was given a fortnight later, again to a packed house. The audience consisted of advertisers and advertising agency men. We show our films to the trade with just as much confidence as we show them to the public. We know that they are as good as any advertising films being produced to-day.

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Proposed—A Central Recording Outfit For Amateur Clubs

Mr. Grierson's offer in January *World Film News* to secure the expert advice of professional directors at the free disposal of amateurs making films of civic interest is perhaps the most important event that has yet happened in the amateur world.

But if amateurs are to play as significant a part as he suggests in reporting aspects of community life and in winning a place for their films in public programmes, something more is needed—and that is Sound.

The limitations of silent film are greater now than they were in 1929, because you have deliberately to construct your scenario to avoid making your audience conscious of the lack of that sound to which it is nowadays accustomed. Titles look archaic; their avoidance imposes a narrative method that appears uneconomical and clumsy to modern eyes. The amateur is tempted, therefore, to consider his subject romantically rather than analytically and to be concerned more with the visual good looks of his shots than with their logical content. And this, though it may make for the most pleasing silent films, does not, Mr. Grierson would agree, make for the best documentary.

To bring the emphasis from form to content we must have sound. Few of us who are amateurs can afford it. In my own unit we divert ourselves considerably with amplifying apparatus that includes two gramophone turn-tables, a mixing unit, and a mike, which enables us to project a sound accompaniment of sorts when we screen our own films. But if we are to make films that are of use to civic or commercial concerns, and that can be shown universally, then we need to have the sound "fixed"—on film or disc—for all time.

Can Mr. Grierson put at the disposal of amateurs a central recording plant for the post-synchronisation of their work? Can he tell amateurs the cost of operating such a plant if it became available? For, if the running-costs were not prohibitive, there must be scores and scores of amateur units like my own that would gladly put down £5 or £10 towards the initial outlay.

ERNEST DYER.

Mr. Grierson asks: "How many amateur units will—like Mr. Dyer's—put down £10 for this purpose?"

"Way to the Sea"

A further experiment in documentary

"The Way to the Sea" **by J. B. Holmes**

The Way to the Sea (Strand Films).

Production: Paul Rotha. Direction: J. B. Holmes.

This is Holmes' first big film under the Strand Film banner. It proves him a director of great technical ability, considerable resource and a good sense of effect. In *The Way to the Sea* there is, however, a certain lack of the real appreciation of human beings, which the documentary film above all others demands.

As a whole the film suffers from not knowing where it is going. It begins impressively with a historical sequence about Portsmouth, the Navy, and the road from London. It continues analytically with the process of the electrification of the London to Portsmouth railway line. It ends imaginatively with a road to the sea, a description of holidaying at the Isle of Wight and finally Navy Week. Each of these sequences is intrinsically good.

But the final impression the film leaves—even after a second viewing—is one of indecision; it impresses only in bits. It makes a series of statements which do not finally combine into a coherent whole.

The trouble probably began when Rotha and Holmes were scripting and were faced with the problem—was the film to be about advantages of electricity, the joys of summer holidays, or the story of Portsmouth and Britain's sea power?—or how could these elements be attached to a really solid skeleton? I do not think they found the answer.

The Way to the Sea has so many first-class qualities that it is necessary to apply to it a really high standard of criticism. Taking it piece-meal, it is full of good things. Particularly excellent is the sequence of the journey to the sea and holiday makers, in which Holmes' sensitive direction combines strongly with Auden's apt and moving images and an effectively economic score by Britten. All through the film both the camera work and cutting are extremely good. Because of the problems it raises (even if it has not solved them all) it merits the close attention of everybody interested in the Realist Film. B. W.

BOOK REVIEW

"Only Yesterday." A Play in Three Acts by Adrian Brunel (George Newnes).

Adrian Brunel, who has a long tradition of service in the movie business, has adapted the successful silent film **Blighty** into play form. He ends his preface with the words ". . . it is my documentary of the home front." It is a documentary, but of limited class. The war fought on the home front in this play is fought in the houses of the upper middle class.

Mr. Brunel has ably expressed the vague liberal spirit of pre-war days, with a tinge of Edwardian stuffiness. The play moves quickly and shows the influence of the movie mind on the theatre, though in idea and propaganda value it is weak. It should do well in Shaftesbury Avenue. D. F. T.

Ancient History of the Cinema

Many comments and much additional information have reached us from reliable sources on our January article "How the Movies Began to Move," by Marie Seton. Several of the writers emphasise the need for an authenticated history of the film. On this Robb Lawson writes:

"Will Day was completing his authoritative history of Kinematography, '25,000 Years to Trap a Shadow,' when death intervened. Cannot some representative body take up the duty of its publication? That would put an end to loosely written history. Even the 'Snob's Bible,' the Enclyclopædia Britannica, had to go to America to find the Film History expert, and naturally, he was not aware that England had any Film History. Day's book explored the world-aspect, and it took him 30 years to authenticate and secure actual documentary proofs for all statements made."

On various points touched on in our article Mr. Lawson comments:

THAUMATROPE.

Will Day credited its invention to Sir John Herschel, *circa* 1824, after Herschel had heard Dr. Roget lecture at the Royal Society on "Explanation of an Optical Deception." The Thaumatrope was put on the market by the vendor, John Ayrton, Paris, in 1826.

DAEDALEUM.

Dr. Horner's "Daedaleum" or "Wheel of the Devil" is mentioned in *The Philosophical Magazine* in 1834, four years prior to Miss Seton's date. It was re-invented in France in 1860 and called "The Wheel of Life." Dr. Horner came from Bristol, not from America.

INVENTOR OF CELLULOID.

Will Hay always contended that Alexander Parkes of Birmingham had invented celluloid in 1854, and that it was first clarified, for use in a hand-camera, in place of hand-plates, by Hyatt, New Jersey, in 1869; followed by J. Carbutt of Philadelphia in 1884.

In the year 1887, Rev. Hannibal Goodwin, an American clergyman, patented a process for clarified film in ribbon form.

For years Goodwin's relatives fought Eastman on the question of infringement of their 1887 Celluloid Patent. I believe some financial arrangement, as between the parties, settled the matter. What it was—the public have never known.

Your article reads—"At last on 22nd March 1896, a short film invented by August and Louis Lumière was shown in Paris."

As a matter of fact, Lumière procured his first patent on 13th February 1895, demonstrated his "Cinematographe" (by screening his films) before a private assembly at Lyons on March 22nd, 1895, and subsequently presented to the public, in the basement of the Grand Café on the Paris Boulevards, in December 1895.

Lumière made no claim to be the originator of Kinematography. In conversation, he revealed the fact that his first idea of its possibilities came to him after having seen Edison's Kinetoscope in Paris.

"Victory came to me when I was able in December 1894, to photograph a moving picture of 17 metres long, showing the workers leaving my father's factory at Lyons. I had yet to devise the method by which I could project my secret on the screen. That was accomplished on 22nd March, 1895."

We have been unable to publish, this month, all the information about the ancient history of films that has reached us, as a result of Marie Seton's article in January: "How the Movies began to Move."

Further information will be published in the February issue.

Basil Wright

(late Senior Director of the E.M.B. & G.P.O. Film Units)

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THE SAVING OF BILL BLEWITT
HOUSING PROBLEMS
MAN OF ARAN
B.B.C.—THE VOICE OF BRITAIN

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RADIO NOTES:

B.B.C. and conflict of Commercial concerns; steering a course in national interest; John Hilton and the hire-purchase scandal; the Coleridge Biography; new Talks Director.

by *GEORGE AUDIT.*

EVER SINCE THE B.B.C.'s remarkable birth from the pockets of six big radio manufacturers it has been hard up against the problem of conflicting commercial interests. Anybody could see that this new enterprise with a monopoly and Government patronage was bound to conflict with the Press, and with the musical, film, acting, music-hall and publishing professions. Generally the B.B.C. won. Before the broadcasting licence was granted by the Post Office, an assurance had to be given to the Press that during the original period of the licence, the first news bulletin would not be read before 7 p.m. The first licence did not permit running commentaries on public ceremonies or on any event that was considered "hot" news.

* * *

By 1924 Reith admitted: "The Press have met us on certain matters and we have endeavoured to meet them." The artistic professions soon had to knuckle under.

* * *

The Royal Charter commanded that Reith and the Governors should steer a course "in the national interest." Bankers, the Cabinet, armament manufacturers, and the directors of every kind of ramp all expected Reith to interpret this their way. So far he has pleased most of them. He has occasional lapses.

* * *

Advertisements for drinks are consistently refused by B.B.C. papers, although the *Radio Times* is frequently packed with "quack" advertisements.

★ ★ ★

John Hilton, who is speaking again on February 11, has apparently been sailing near the wind. Last month he uncovered the workings of the less reputable hire-purchase firms, correspondence schools and publishers. There were immediate reductions in the sales of certain well-known firms. Representations were made to the B.B.C. Henceforward Hilton's manuscripts must be submitted a little longer in advance.

★ ★ ★

The most interesting piece of sound production last month was E. A. Harding's biography of *Coleridge*. It tried to present a picture of Coleridge through a series of dialogues in which the poet, in his own words, answered the apologies and criticisms of his contemporaries. The resulting drama was a tussle between the subjective and the impersonal points of view. You were constantly divided between sympathy for Coleridge the man, with his aspirations and misfortunes, and the judgments of men like Wordsworth and De Quincey.

* * *

The whole was set against a sustained background of Sibelius' music. There were extracts from all the symphonies. They were well chosen. What is this strange affinity between Coleridge and Sibelius? Thirty-five minutes of their words and music synchronised perfectly.

* * *

There were faults, notably, an involved opening and a poor performance of Coleridge by Farquharson. Otherwise, a very good show.

★ ★ ★

When the B.B.C. were advertising for a new Talks Director, *World Film News* commented on the national importance of this post and on the necessity of a wise choice. From hundreds of applications Sir Richard Maconachie was selected.

"Maconachie, Sir Richard (Roy), K.B.E., C.I.E. 1926, I.C.S. Educ. Tonbridge School, University College, Oxford, B.A. 1907; entered Indian Civil Service 1909; Foreign and Political Dept. 1914; military service 1917–19; Counsellor, Kabul 1922–24; British Minister to Afghanistan 1930–35. Club, E. India United Services."

That is what *Who's Who* says of him. The subject of this remarkable career is no doubt worthy enough in many respects, but is he likely to know precisely what his be-millioned audience with its problems and its fancies, is needing to know?

* * *

If the answer to that question lies in the new Spring Talks programme it is disappointing. A series on shopping, another on Church and Community, and another on Shakespeare may satisfy a few but I am willing to wager that Radio Luxembourg will prove more popular.

B.B.C. Events

Monday, Feb. 1st, 1.0 p.m.: Fourth Test Match (from Adelaide). NATIONAL.
★Wednesday, Feb. 3rd, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert (Beecham). W. Gieseking, piano. NATIONAL. 8.40 p.m.: ★*Broadway* (early gangster play) produced Gielgud. REGIONAL.
Thursday, Feb. 4th, 7.30 p.m.: Hallé Concert (Barbirolli). REGIONAL.
Friday, Feb. 5th, 8.15 p.m.: B.B.C. Midland Orchestra. *The Blessed Damozel* (Debussy). REGIONAL.
Saturday, Feb. 6th, 2.50 p.m.: Wales *v.* Scotland (Rugger). NATIONAL.
Sunday, Feb. 7th, 10.5 p.m.: *Lepanto* (Chesterton). Prod. Gielgud. NATIONAL. 6.30 p.m.: Sunday Orchestral Concert No. 14 (Boult). REGIONAL.
Monday, Feb. 8th, 8.0 p.m.: *Its Happening Now.* NATIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: B.B.C. Orchestra, Jelly D'Aranyi and Adila Fachiri. REGIONAL. 8.30 p.m.: *Wait For Me* (Wade). Prod. Burnham. REGIONAL.
Tuesday, Feb. 9th, 9.20 p.m.: Church, Community and State, Lord Lothian. NATIONAL. 8.15 p.m.: Modern Poetry, No. 1. REGIONAL.
Wednesday, Feb. 10th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert. (Wood). Arthur Rubenstein (piano). NATIONAL.
Thursday, Feb. 11th, 6.20 p.m.: *This Way Out.* John Hilton. NATIONAL. ★8.15 p.m.: Royal Philharmonic concert (Sargent). *Balshazzar's Feast.* (Walton). REGIONAL.
Friday, Feb. 12th, 8.0 p.m.: The White Coons. NATIONAL.
Saturday, Feb. 13th, 2.35 p.m.: England *v.* Ireland (Rugger). Capt. Wakelam. NATIONAL. 7.45 p.m. *Boris Godounov.* Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.
★Sunday, Feb. 14th, 5.35 p.m.: *All For Love.* (Dryden). Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.
★Tuesday, Feb. 16th, 9.20 p.m.: Church, Community and State. T. S. Eliot. NATIONAL.
Wednesday, Feb. 17th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert. (Szigeti, Boult). NATIONAL.
Thursday, Feb. 18th, 9.45 p.m.: Talk by Edward Clark on the Contemporary Music Concert. NATIONAL. 8.15 p.m.: *The Nightingale* (Anderson). Production: Gielgud. REGIONAL.
Friday, Feb. 19th, 9.40 p.m.: Contemporary Music Concert (Ansermet). NATIONAL. 9.0 p.m. Feature programme: *Blue Danube.* Production: Gielgud. REGIONAL.
Sunday, Feb. 21st, 9.30 p.m.: *Henry Brocken* (de la Mere). Production: Burnham. NATIONAL 5.0 p.m. Feature programme, *Stede Bonnet.* REGIONAL.
Tuesday, Feb. 23rd, 8.0 p.m.: Feature Programme, *Steel.* REGIONAL.
Wednesday, Feb. 24th, 8.15 p.m.: Queen's Hall Concert. (Ansermet). NATIONAL.
Thursday, Feb. 25th, 8.40 p.m.: Shakespeare. Granville Barker. NATIONAL.
Friday, Feb. 26th, 1.0 p.m.: Fifth Test Match (from Melbourne). NATIONAL. 8.45 p.m.: Opera from Budapest. *Szekeley Fono.* (Kodaly). REGIONAL.
Saturday, Feb. 27th, 2.50 p.m.: Ireland *v.* Scotland (Rugger) from Dublin. NATIONAL.
★Sunday, Feb. 28th, 5.35 p.m.: *Anthony and Cleopatra* (Shakespeare). Production: Gielgud. NATIONAL.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

With this issue of the World Film News we celebrate our fourth birthday.

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CONTINENTAL NEWS

FRANCE

From a long list of pictures now in production in France prominence should be given to the new Pabst opus, *Mademoiselle Docteur*, the cast of which includes Pierre Blanchard, Dita Parlo and Pierre Fresnay. A Maxim Gorki story is being filmed by Jean Renoir, *Les Bas-Fonds*, and *Nitchevo* is being made by Jacques de Baroncelli with Harry Baur, Ivan Mosjoukine and Marcelle Cyantal. Maurice Chevalier is also engaged on a new production which Maurice Tourneur is directing, to be called *Avec le Sourire*. Henri Bernstein, the celebrated dramatist who wrote the play on which Bergner's *Träumende Mund* was based, has another of his plays in production, *L'Assaut*.

* * *

L'Appel du Silence, directed by Léon Poirier, has been awarded La Grande Prix du Cinema, the famous prize presented by La Société d'Encouragement à l'Art et à l'Industrie, for the best French film of 1936. This film—the history of Charles de Foucauld, a French officer who turned missionary and later died as a victim of the great war—scored over Benoit-Levy's *Héléne* and Abel Gance's *Un Grand Amour de Beethoven* by its strong national theme, and not by its technical merit. This same award was made to Feyder's *La Kermesse Héroïque* in 1935.

* * *

In opposition to the kind of award described above, the Prix Louis Delluc has been created by a group called "Jeune Critique Indépendante." This prize is warded for unorthodox and radical productions. Among the judges are Mercel Achard, Claude Aveline, Pierre Bost, Georges Charensol, Benjamin Fainsilbe and Jean Vidal. This year's award goes to Jean Renoir's *Les Bas-Fonds*.

* * *

Erich von Stroheim, the German actor-director, who is now playing in the French spy drama *Marthe Richard, Espionne de France*, has been invited by General Franco to fly over the Spanish lines to film the fighting. It is reported that he may accept after his present engagement is finished. He has just completed for M.G.M. a scenario for a film entitled *General Hospital*, in which he has aimed at showing "a new and wholly different sex—the sex of hospital nurses, whose contacts with men have no social or conventional limits." Among the films he has in mind is one from his own story of a somnambulist girl and her drunkard father. He also has ideas for a war film "which no country would allow to be shot"—indicating how women are responsible for war since the warrior is their hero and the men have to parade in uniforms to win their love.

BELGIUM

(*By our Brussels Correspondent*)

Belgium is now awaiting the recommendations of a Committee set up by the Government to enquire into the means of fostering a National Screen Industry.

It is already alleged that during the sessions of the committee a good deal of racketeering went on. A combine of French and Belgian interests tried to force through a plan for a large central studio. The influences behind this plan were by no means National and a Press campaign against it caused, it is believed, a heavy rewrite of much of the Report.

Meantime it seems probable that the Committee will recommend State Credits to approved production companies and a Quota system similar to our own.

Projects are already in hand for a £40,000 studio, and the sponsors are only waiting for publication of the Report to go ahead.

* * *

Henri Storck has completed three shorts on aspects of Belgian life, for showing at the Paris Exhibition this year.

Dekeukelaire is engaged on a Belgian feature picture, *Le Mauvais Oeil*, based on a story by Hermann Terlinck. He is using Flemish peasants as actors.

HUNGARY

Following the film *Hortobagy*, Hungary is now making an ambitious film in quite a different style to be called *Rendez-vous on the Danube*, which Stephen Szekely is directing.

GERMANY

A number of interesting films are at present in production in Germany. Emil Jannings is working on *Der Herrscher* (The Autocrat), and Magda Schneider is at the moment finishing *Frauenliebe, Frauenlied*. The new Gigli picture, *Der Sänger Ihrer Hoheit* is now in production with Geraldine Katt in a prominent part. Director Rudolf van der Noss and star Camilla Horn are making *Die Weisse Schwester*, the first German-Hungarian co-operative film. Much is expected in Germany of *Ball im Metropol*, a musical feature which Frank Wysbar is completing at the Neubabelsberg studios.

* * *

Pabst's interest in transferring opera to the screen has already been proclaimed by the *Drei Groschen Oper* and *Don Quixote*. He believes that there is a widespread demand for opera among Continental and particularly German audiences. He holds that the adaptation to movie of existing operas will lead to the writing of opera specially for the screen, and thus to a more general conception of sound-films in terms of music.

TOP HATS AND BALD HEADS

by R. H. KIEK

"The Ballad of the Top Hat"

AT the risk of being called a chauvinist I would select as the best short picture of the year a Dutch one—*The Ballad of the Top Hat*. This selection I make with due consideration even after seeing Holland's worst picture, *One Evening in May*.

There is much to say for and against the institution of top hats. Consider the annual magazine (with a circulation of not less than three copies) which, I am told, alone champions the cause of this solemn monstrosity. Consider also the attitude of the 1937 flapper to top hats. Ask her about the subject and she will simply turn on the radio to any station and deafen you with a nauseating musical cataract of eulogies on the subject.

The new Dutch picture gives a funny, yet philosophical survey of the top hat's function in modern civilisation. It is a filmic essay describing the rise and fall of this solemn headdress. From the worthy but bald head of a diplomatist the top hat climbs down the social scale to the respective heads of a bald bridegroom, a gravedigger, a cab-driver and a street musician. The end is in a watery grave in a Dutch canal.

The social contrasts of the film are wide. There is a session in the League of Nations with the accompanying sound of rattling machine-guns. There is an incident when the top hat, recently the property of a street musican, becomes a football for two boys. With a clever pass they shoot it into the canal to the sound accompaniment of the cheers of a thousand-throated football mob.

Throughout the picture there is this contrast between camera and sound illustration and constant play with image and sound. The technique is advanced and quite free from stage influence.

Unfortunately *Ballad of a Top Hat* has been boycotted in Holland thanks to a personal misunderstanding between De Haas, the producer and the Dutch League of Cinematography.

ACCURACY—THE BASIS OF TEACHING FILMS

By K. R. EDWARDS (Production Manager, Eastman Kodak Teaching Films)

THE MOTION PICTURE has become so completely the special property of the picture palace that it seems quite natural for us to consider them as inseparable. The principal disadvantage of this restriction of the film to the theatre is the fact that it has established, in the mind of the average person, a very definite idea and pattern of what a motion picture should be like. In the picture palace each subject is treated on the basis of the dramatic formula of introduction, climax and conclusion—a conclusion which invariably dismisses the subject with an air of finality.

Educators agree that the textbook should not tell the whole story. It should present each problem in such a fashion that the student will be stimulated to inquire and eventually form conclusions on his own initiative. This is the theory upon which most textbooks and classroom practice are founded, but when this method is followed in the production of a motion picture the effect is, for the average individual, an anti-climax, for the reason that we have become so accustomed to having the film tell the story from beginning to end.

Movement and Action

In complete contrast to theatrical films, the teaching film seeks only to present an accurate image and faithful record of life photographed under unrehearsed conditions. It is assumed that the pupils will receive some preliminary instruction before reviewing the film, and that a discussion of the subject will follow. It is desirable, therefore, to avoid an air of finality in concluding the film.

The outstanding characteristic of the film is movement, action; and the selection of both the theme and the scenes and sequences illustrating that theme should be limited to subjects which can be shown either to the greatest possible advantage in motion pictures, or by no other means than through this medium.

The school has a large and definite number of objectives that must be reached within a more or less limited period, and it is essential, therefore, that the films have to do only with those subjects which are included in the curriculum and are directly applicable to the mental development of the pupil.

The ideal teaching film can be achieved only as a result of skilful and complete co-operation between pedagogical authority and the technique of mechanical production. The principal difficulty in achieving such co-operation is the lack of uniformity in teaching procedure—the absence of a standardised methodology. Films correlated with the text of a particular subject as it is taught in one school may or may not be suitable for use in other schools. This diversity in procedure is in direct proportion to the relative complexity of the subject matter. In practice this means that films on elementary subjects which involve a minimum of variation in teaching technique will attain maximum use and distribution, and will cost the least to produce; while more difficult subjects, involving greater variation, will find less use and cost more. If the producers are to live, they must make up on the simple films, produced for the lower grades, what they lose on the complex ones intended for the higher levels.

As a practical illustration of proper film structure consider a classroom film on the subject of geography. The average theatrical travelogue on the subject of a foreign country is usually limited to general views that emphasise the novelty in landscape and architecture characteristic of the country. For instructional purposes, scenes of this kind are in no way superior to still pictures on a printed page, or to lantern slides. The producer should proceed on the principle of Pope's frequently quoted statement that "the proper study of mankind is man," and should undertake to include in a teaching film only those scenes which will comprehensively illustrate the life of a people—their manners, customs, native arts, industries, agriculture and schools.

Translate in terms of people

The current evolutionary trend in education is favourable, fortunately, to the film. An example is the shift noted in the schools' approach to the teaching of geography; namely, from political boundaries to natural regions, which the screen —and the screen alone—is competent to present completely and comprehensively.

Knowledge of the world—human geography—is most easily understood when translated in terms of the lives of the people who live in it. The motion picture should not undertake to compete with the textbook, the map, and the blackboard, but should be devoted to an exposition of the realities of life which this medium alone can adequately approximate.

Scotland's Work Highly Organised

ACTIVITIES IN SCOTLAND in connection with the use of the cinematograph are now in a highly organised condition, and the graphical statement on the page facing shows the existing position.

Some two or three years ago it was realised that co-ordination of effort was needed if any real progress was to be made. Representatives of bodies interested in the use of the cinematograph met and discussed how the various interests could best be merged. As an outcome there came into being the Scottish Film Council, federating, for purposes of co-operation, all those interested in the educational, the cultural, the artistic and the industrial and commercial possibilities of the screen. The Film Council is definitely linked up with the British Film Institute from which it derives its funds. The Council operates through several Panels each dealing with a specific aspect of cinematography, such as education, social service, amateur production and entertainment.

Branch organisation

One of the federated organisations on the educational side is the Scottish Educational Film Association which itself came into being as a result of the merger of two earlier societies. The principal aim of the Film Association is to foster interest in and to promote the use of films and other visual aids in education. The branch organisation of the Association is a strong feature. Every branch is co-terminous with an education area, and it is therefore made easy for Education Committees to grant support since the membership of a branch is, in the main, drawn from their own teaching staff. One of the most important functions of the branches will be the viewing and assessment of educational films under the general control of the Scottish Film Council which has set up a Co-ordinating Committee and specialist Panels to receive and make final pronouncements upon the reports received from the branches of the Film Association.

Production groups

Another growing and interesting feature of the work of branches of the Film Association is the formation of groups for the production of films for use in the classroom. These will, of course, but serve a small part of the needs of the schools, but the experience should be helpful in leading teachers to realise the difficulties of the professional producer of educational films, and also in enabling teachers to afford more valuable advice as to the actual requirements of the schools.

The Social Service Panel of the Film Council has recently had an accession in the shape of those interested in the adaptation of the cinematograph to the work of the Churches. The Amateur cinematograph Panel has been the guiding force in the non-professional production of films, principally through an Annual Film Festival. The Entertainment Panel is endeavouring to raise the standard of appreciation of the fare provided in the ordinary cinematograph theatres by the circulation from time to time of lists of recommended films. The issue by the Council of a Scottish Film Bulletin, which has now reached a circulation of well over 6,000 copies, forms a useful link for all aspects of the more specialised use of the cinematograph in Scotland.

J. B. FRIZELL.

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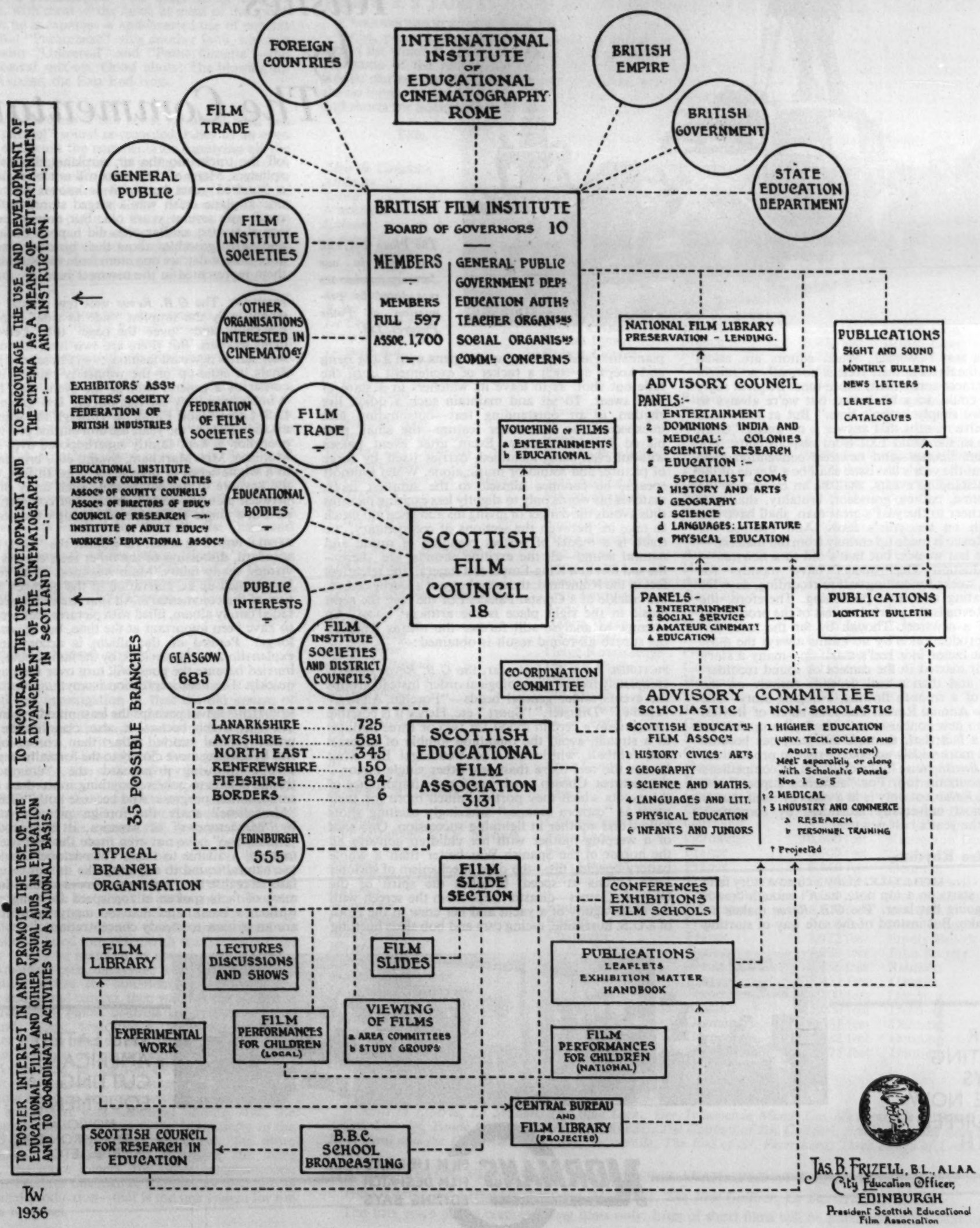
SCOTLAND—NON-THEATRICAL RELATIONSHIPS



JAS. B. FRIZELL, B.L., A.L.A.A.
City Education Officer,
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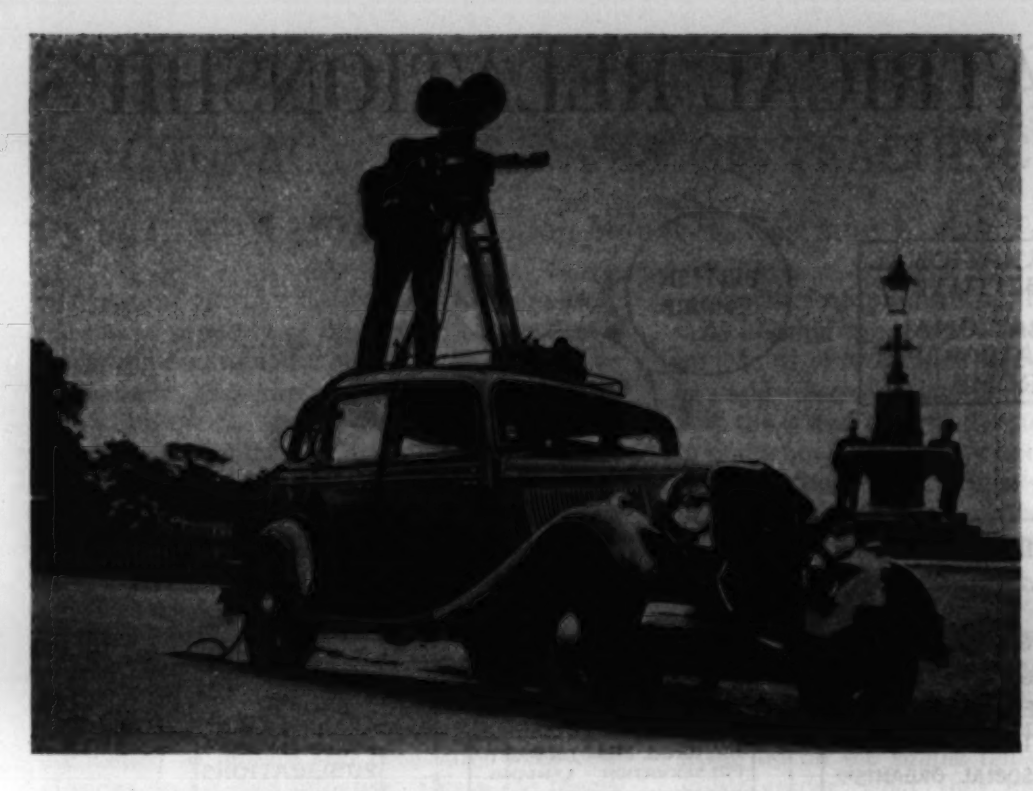

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YEAR'S BEST NEWSREEL. When editors are asked why the finish of their reels is normally so rough, their most convenient, hence most frequent reply is: "We could do a lot better, but we're always so rushed, we simply haven't time." But at least once every twelve months that answer is no longer "Open Sesame" to the Main Exit from responsibility. For convention dictates—and newsreel convention rules hard—that the year's last issue shall be a Revue of the year's outstanding events, shall be an essence of the year's drama, pathos, grandeur, brutality, shall give one last cheer to the year's great man, shall have one last laugh on the year's fools. And because the Annual Revue is made up entirely from old material—it may be last week's, but that's old to a newsreel—the Production Departments have months for planning, weeks for cutting and re-recording, days for commentating and final publishing. Therefore, the Annual Revue is the year's best test of the production ability of a newsreel. Though by far the most important, production is by no means always the most prominent factor in a reel's make-up—many a story is made or marred in the camera or sound recorder. But now and then a reel depends entirely on the build-up of a smooth flowing, swinging story—one such is the Annual Revue. The 1936 batch of Revues leads to no new conclusions, instead piles up further proof of a fact that, through the year, has become more and more widely accepted—that in production, *Gaumont British News* looks down on its competitors from a mountain top. For "audience impact," the 1936 *G.B. Revue* not only is in a class by itself, but is being almost universally acclaimed by competent critics as the year's best newsreel.

Quick Fire Rhythm

BIG BANG . . . LITTLE TALK. Many a cinema story fails because it starts on a top note, hasn't enough breath to avoid going flat later. The *G.B. Revue* makes no such mistake. But instead of the safe way of starting pianissimo and working up, it opens with a big bang and keeps up such a racket of excitement until the fade out shot, as to leave its watchers in a state of mild sweat. To set and maintain such a quick fire rhythm is an outstanding feat—outstanding and unexpected too is another feature—the small part played by commentary. Event after event passes without even being identified, carries itself by force of picture, and sound or music alone. When Emmott speaks, he confines himself to the simplest facts, matches his words only to slightly less exciting pictures thus avoids the danger of giving his audience too much to take in. Between the sections of commentary, the track is a model of perfect blending of music and natural sound—all the exciting sounds are there—the sad feet at a King-Emperor's funeral, the relentless feet in the Rhineland, the symphony of a Derby crowd, the crackle of a Crystal Palace. For the rest, the right music in the right place is the artificial boost. An attempt to analyse still further the means whereby the superb all-round result is obtained:—

PICTURES. As it did last year, the *G.B. Revue* departs completely from a chronological order, instead groups the events under general heads—"Foreign Affairs," "Home," "Disaster," "Sport," etc. Hence it is possible to maintain a certain mood for two or three minutes at a stretch, avoid the muddling jumble of funerals and football, whirlwinds and weddings! But what boosts the reel more than any other single factor—the pictures. Chosen much less for the importance of the events which they portray, much more for their merit as "camera scoops," amazingly exciting shots follow one another in lightning succession. One shot of a weeping mother with her children conveys all the horror of the Spanish War better than a whole battery opening fire—the oiled mechanism of sprinter Jesse Owens at speed, breathes the spirit of the Olympic Games—disaster leaps from the screen with the death agony of a yacht and her crew in the froth of a U.S. hurricane, racing cars and bob sleds hurtling off the track into the air, airplanes dissolving into splinters. Many of the events will not be remembered a hundred years hence—it is known that at least one airplane crash was a staged stunt, that one car crash was several years old. But even if not those actual events, similar ones did happen during 1936, and purist grumbles about their historical unimportance cannot detract one atom from the thrill of seeing them represented in the newsreel year.

PRINTING. The *G.B. Revue* uses few optical printing stunts, only the simplest "side to side" wipes, plus blackouts and "over the page" titles between the main sections. But there are two innovations which may start a newsreel fashion :—(1) In several sporting finals, a close-up of the winner is printed into one corner of a general shot of the event, *i.e.*, Perry at Wimbledon, Pam Barton on the last green of the U.S. Ladies' Golf Final. (2) Through the sequence of aviation feats of the year, the dim outline of a whirring propellor is kept faintly superimposed over shots of Mollison, Mrs. Markham, Swain, etc., bringing unity to a whole series of diverse pictures. In fact, unity is the keynote of the whole reel—such unity of "pull" between pictures, sound, music, and commentary, as no other single reel achieved through the year.

FAMILY PHOTO ALBUMS. As against the "G.B. Revue" standard, discussion of the other reels centres on few virtues, many faults. Main weakness of all four can be summed up as, starvation of the pictures, indigestion of the commentary. All four are reminiscent of a faded family album, filled with pictures that are known to have been important at the time, but appear so no longer. Perusal of the album is accompanied by explanations of the obvious, by the family bore, unduly hurried because the guest will turn over the pages too quickly. The final impression is anything but clear.

MOVIETONE leaves perhaps the least muddle memory of the four, largely because it, also, classifies the events under general heads, rather than chronologically. But by sticking more closely to the formally important events, throwing overboard the "unimportant" thrills, it fails to achieve anything more than a measured, stately progress. And because both "G.B." and "Movietone" share the foreign pictures supplied by "Movietonews" of America, it is obvious that "Movietone" have not even made the best use of the material available to them. "Movietone" neglects to use natural sound to anything like its full value, also fails to realise that cinema-audiences cannot follow a mass of facts spoken at top speed for long periods without a break, and that too many stunt dissolves are an irritant to steady concentration.

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PARAMOUNT has most of the stock faults—the formal dullness—a commentator who keeps going most of the time, with most of the facts, at most of the speed of which he is capable—a half-hearted use of natural sound. But "Paramount" adds another fault, which it shares with "Universal" and "Pathé Gazette"—the chronological mix-up. Good shots: The blowing up of the Alcazar, the East End riots.

UNIVERSAL, because it can boast no sound unit, has all its "natural" sound re-recorded, relies to an even greater extent on the commentator supplying all the accompaniment. Certain it is that Jeffry makes a noble effort, not nearly so certain that he succeeds in being interesting for more than a fraction of the time. Proof that people cannot listen to commentary and watch an exciting picture at the same time (see above) comes when, over a "scoop" picture of the East End riots, Jeffry attempts a pun, it falls flat. Good shot: A London police horse struggling to avoid falling. Bold shot: A studio portrait of Mrs. Simpson.

PATHE GAZETTE. Better than any general description, the quality of the "Pathé Revue" is summed up with the following facts:—(1) It uses NO natural sound whatsoever. Close-ups of cheering crowds, of Pam Barton making a speech, of Garter King of Arms proclaiming a new sovereign, are all passed with a musical "silence." (2) The musical background is apparently made up from short lengths of library music, none too well matched to the picture. On the Trooping of the Colour, the Guards march in slow time to the accompaniment of a Quick Step—and halfway through the final shot of the Spanish war sequence, the music suddenly changes from a dramatic drum roll to a twinkly tune intended for the following event. (3) There are at least two stories included by all other reels, but omitted by "Pathé"—the Duke and Duchess of Kent and their son, and the Crystal Palace fire, though of the latter, "Pathé" had the only pictures of the actual fall of the roof. (4) Optical printing tricks, including wipes or dissolves of any type, are notable by their absence.

Co-ordinate Sound and Picture

ONE SYSTEM . . . ONE MAN. The conclusion reached from all this investigation is, that the old system of newsreel production, an echo from the first arrival of sound, is no longer able to cope with modern demands. The old system, as it still hobbles along to-day, implies that the editor should first completely cut each story silent, like a slice of dry bread, then hand the job on to the sound man, who spreads the butter, then leave it to the commentator to add the jam. Almost every production fault of the newsreels is due to variations of this system, still in force. Until it is thrown overboard, until editors realise that picture, sound, and commentary can be, must be, planned side by side, the unity of the "G.B. Revue" will remain an exclusive feature. The "G.B." production lead is due to the fact that the entire make-up of the reel, at the cutting, commentating, and re-recording, is under the control of commentator Emmott. Every shot is fitted into place with the full realisation of how it will be matched to sound and speech. In some American reels, the system is carried even further. The editor writes the commentary, alongside the picture and sound cutting, then watches the picture at the re-recording panel, controls the relative volume of sound, music, and speech, and cues the commentator for the start of each paragraph. The commentator watches only a red signal lamp, thus gives his full attention to the job of voice control. But whether it be the editor, the commentator, or anyone else, there must be one man with experience of two highly specialised jobs—newsreel editing, and the technique of the spoken word—to bring unity to the finished product. The more executives, the more cameramen, the more sound recordists, the more cutters, the more joiners, the more commentators, the more need for one man to combine all their efforts in the final production—that is the one system for the modern newsreel.

FOR FILM SOCIETIES

A Guide to Available Foreign Films

(Edited by J. S. FAIRFAX-JONES (Hon. General Secretary of the Southampton Film Society)).

CORRESPONDENCE WITH the Film Societies has shown us that there is need for a reasonably comprehensive list, periodically revised and enlarged, of films in demand by the Societies. We have therefore prepared such a list which is given below and which contains short particulars of each film, the approximate length, the name of the renter, the country of origin and other useful details. This list will be added to each month during the film society season. Enquiries are often received about early films which for various reasons are no longer available. A list of these is also appended. Brief notes as to the suitability of new continental films and shorts for Societies will be added from month to month.

Title.	Director or Star.	Country of Origin.	Approximate Length.	Renter.
Zéro de Conduite	Jean Vigo	France	4,000 feet	Film Society
Atalante	Jean Vigo	France	7,000 feet	Film Society
Sabra	—	Poland	—	Film Society
Maskerade	Paula Wessely	Austria	8,859 feet	Reunion
Episode	Paula Wessely	Austria	8,480 feet	Reunion
Son autre Amour	Jeanne Boitel	France	8,010 feet	Reunion
St. Petersburg	K. Tarassova	Russia	6,717 feet	Reunion
Jazz Comedy	G. V. Alexandrov	Russia	6,983 feet	Reunion
Hohe Schule	Rudolph Forster	Austria	8,139 feet	Reunion
Sans Famille	Robert Lynen	France	8,753 feet	Reunion
Reka	—	Czecho-Slovakia	7,296 feet	Reunion
La Crise est Finie	Albert Prejean	France	6,925 feet	British Lion
Poile de Corotte	Robert Lynen	France	8,970 feet	British Lion
Le petit Roi	Robert Lynen	France	8,210 feet	British Lion
Savoy Hotel 217	Hans Albers	Germany	7,500 feet	Wainwright
Potemkin	Eisenstein	Russia	4,446 feet	Progressive
Bed and Sofa	Room	Russia	—	Progressive
The New Babylon	Trauberg	Russia	—	Progressive
Storm over Asia	Pudovkin	Russia	—	Progressive
Sous les Toits de Paris	Rene Clair	France	8,302 feet	Wardour Films
La dame aux Camelias	Yvonne Printemps	France	9,990 feet	Exclusive Films
Paris-mediteranne	Annabella	France	8,124 feet	Exclusive Films
Der Hauptmann von Köpenick	Max Adalbert	Germany	7,000 feet	International
Merlusse	Marcel Poupon	France	6,700 feet	Tobis
Die Ewige Maske	Mathias Wiemann	Switzerland	7,100 feet	Tobis
Veille d'Armes	Annabella	France	8,860 feet	Tobis
Crime et Chatiment	Pierre Blanchard	France	8,820 feet	Tobis
Sylvia und ihr Chauffeur	Leo Slezak	Austria	7,340 feet	Tobis
The Crosspatch	Louis Borel	Holland	7,920 feet	Tobis
Maria Bashkirtseff	Hans Jaray	Austria	7,500 feet	Tobis
The Old and the Young King	Emil Jannings	Germany	8,249 feet	Tobis
Klein Dorrit	Anny Ondra	Germany	8,247 feet	Tobis
Musik im Blut	Hanna Waag	Germany	6,606 feet	Tobis
Letzte Liebe	Hans Jaray	Austria	6,750 feet	Tobis
Letzte Rose	Helge Rosewaenge	Germany	8,250 feet	Tobis
Reifende Jugend	Herthe Thiele	Germany	8,153 feet	Tobis
Der Schimmelreiter	Mathias Wiemann	Holland	7,040 feet	Tobis
Dood Wasser	Jan Musch	Holland	7,771 feet	Tobis
Lac aux Dames	Simone Simon	France	8,100 feet	A. P. and D.
Kameradschaft	G. W. Pabst	Germany	7,365 feet	A. P. and D.
En Natt	Molander	Sweden	6,500 feet	A. P. and D.
Atlantide	G. W. Pabst	Germany	7,300 feet	A. P. and D.
M.	Fritz Lang	Germany	8,818 feet	National Dists.
The Road to Life	Ekk	Russia	9,600 feet	National Dists.
Mädchen in Uniform	Sagan	Germany	8,206 feet	National Dists.
Kadetten	—	Germany	8,229 feet	National Dists.
Rasputin	Conrad Veidt	Germany	8,500 feet	National Dists.
The Testament of Dr. Mabuse	Fritz Lang	Germany	10,600 feet	Kinograph Dists.
Bonne Chance!	Sacha Guitry	France	6,700 feet	Denning
Remous	Jean Galland	France	6,840 feet	Denning
The Virtuous Isidor	Fernandel	France	6,030 feet	International
Hey-rup	—	Czecho-Slovakia	9,000 feet	Universe Film Services
Morgenrot	Rudolph Forster	Germany	6,624 feet	Wardour
Charlemagne	Raimu	France	7,300 feet	New Realm
Don Quixote	Chaliapin	France	7,072 feet	Equity-British
Westfront 1918	G. W. Pabst	Germany	9,289 feet	Film Society
The Brothers Karamazov	Anna Sten	Germany	8,436 feet	Reunion
Marchand d'Amour	Jean Galland	France	7,453 feet	Denning
Le dernier Milliardaire	René Clair	France	8,100 feet	Denning
Turksib	Turin	Russia	5,000 feet	Denning
The Student of Prague	Arthur Robison	Germany	7,781 feet	Denning
So Ended a Great Love	Paula Wessely	Germany	7,782 feet	Denning
Unfinished Symphony	Marta Eggerth	Germany	8,175 feet	Denning

THE FOLLOWING FILMS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE:

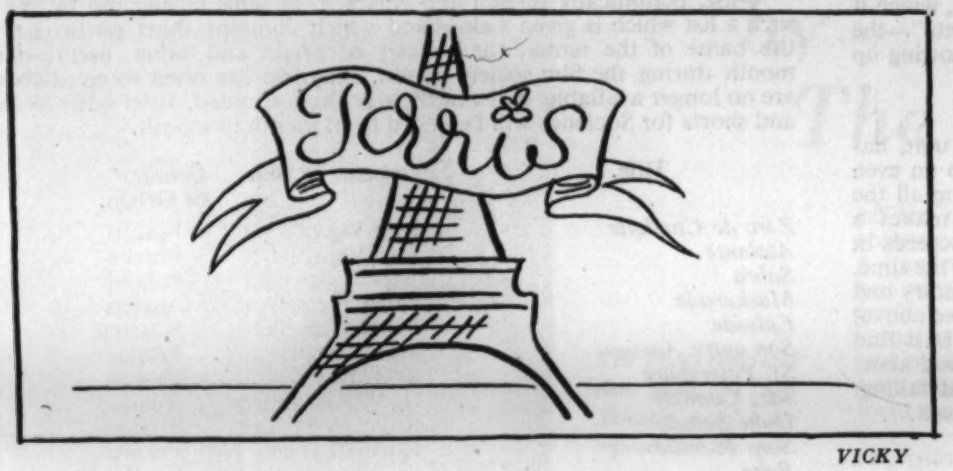
A Nous la Liberte, Le Million, The Blue Light, Der Träumende Mund, Ces Messieurs de la Santé, The Blue Angel, Liebelei, Bonne Chance! (after 30th March), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Vaudeville, The Loves of Jeanne Ney, Emil and the Detectives, Refugees, Barcarolle, The End of St. Petersburg, Three Songs of Lenin.*

THE FOLLOWING FILMS HAVE NOT BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS:

The Deserter, La Kermesse Héroïque, Mayerling, The New Gulliver, La Bandera.

The lists given above comprise *long* films only. Lists of short films will be published in the next issue.

Filming a Foreign Town



VICKY

by Andrew Buchanan

This is the fifth of a series of tuition articles on amateur film production.

FILM POSSESSES A fundamental power which lifts it into a category distinct from all other media—an ability to acquaint one nation with another—to bring the remotest parts of the earth into our homes. Broadcasting, heard but not seen, is inclined to tax the imagination of the listener, and although graphic sounds of a relay from, say, New York, paint an accurate mental picture, Film, by appealing primarily to the eye, leaves very little to the imagination, and brings a true and vivid picture of foreign parts which leaves a deeper impression on the mind. Yet, despite this unique and valuable gift which Film bestows on mankind, only a small percentage of productions, professional or amateur, take advantage of it, although a full and proper use of the medium in this respect could do a great deal towards banishing the objectionable word, "Foreign," from the dictionary.

If you have travelled, you will have met those eager gentlemen who loiter at all great termini selling "Views of the City"—usually in sets of twelve—and whether you have travelled or not, you are bound to have seen the moving picture equivalent of those sets on the screen—endless long shots of bays and principal thoroughfares, divided, perhaps, by a close up of a native staring at you, the whole accompanied by a jovial commentator who strives to "popularise" the subject by introducing as many wisecracks as breathing will permit. They are travelogues, and though sometimes excellent, are usually inadequate. Just how inadequate may be realised by comparing them to *Song of Ceylon*—a picture which captured the real spirit of the place.

CAPTURE SPIRIT OF PLACE

The amateur director should approach his subject determined to create a film that will draw the members of his audiences right into the screen—making them walk through the bazaars, along the boulevards, or up the mountains. They must be made to feel the intense heat, or the lash of the wind: they must be made vividly conscious of everything characteristic of a place. To create such a picture, the conventional stringing together of "views" is not enough, for the first, and last thing to capture is atmosphere, and this is done, as I pointed out in *Filming a Town*, by securing images of countless significant and insignificant objects and mannerisms which, together, shall build up character. Only by penetrating beneath the surface can the spirit of a place be discovered, and captured.

Maybe, such a film could commence on the channel boat, by showing a pile of luggage or a car, on deck, the destination being revealed by fluttering labels. Then a first glimpse of the coast line, followed by someone gazing at it. Then a number of similar coast line shots, each one showing it definitely *nearer*, shot, say, every quarter of an hour—divided by glimpses on board of passengers stirring—collecting their things—throwing rugs down—deck hands sorting baggage—and other little signs that the boat will soon be in. Upon arrival, the scrambling porters on the quay, shot from a high position on the boat, make an interesting study, and perhaps their running feet might be merged into the wheels of the locomotive waiting to convey one to the final destination. Steam is escaping—it will be off soon. Someone is looking for his seat. He examines his large ticket a close up of which, in his hand, will be interesting. Where is he to sit? Place "dos" ver la machine, or Place "face" a la machine? He finds it, and the shot dissolves into locomotive wheels sliding past the camera.

ARRIVAL OF TRAIN

A whirling panorama of flat fields, chimneys and villages, punctuated by telegraph poles, shot from the carriage window, makes a valuable strip of film upon which to superimpose the arrival of the train at Paris, Brussels, Cologne, or wherever we are going. Assume it is Cologne. The above mentioned shot can dissolve into, or be overprinted on to a contrasting angle also from the window, showing the train winding its way over the great bridge of girders, and this, in turn, may merge into the station sign, KOLN.

DOMINATING CATHEDRAL

Now the dominating and obvious thing about a place like Cologne is its Cathedral, but instead of beginning by panning all over its vast exterior, I suggest that its influence over the city should be revealed, thereby creating a more subtle approach to the subject. Glimpses of priests mingling with crowds—shots of shop windows filled with cathedralesque objects, including miniature replicas of the building—several shots of picturesque corners and houses, ancient and modern, each one to include the enormous spires of the cathedral which loom over everything. Thus character begins to form. A close up of a clock showing 6.30 a.m. would be surprising if followed by shots of geranium-framed cafés busily serving coffee, and streets filled with earnest, bareheaded women, and hurrying men, for Germany starts its day early. I should then include a shot or two of the novel parking places for bicycles *near the cathedral*, showing how the machines are suspended on metal frames under awnings, and then make the camera study the low white trams, rather like tube trains, joined one to the other, *passing the cathedral*. In that way I should plant the essential spirit of the place, and gradually lead up to a more detailed analysis of architecture, or whatever feature demanded careful treatment.

In proceeding, I feel it will serve a more useful purpose if I leap from place to place, rather than attempt to concentrate upon any particular locality, for I can then show that the fundamental method of approach is applicable to any nation, city, or village. However, whilst in Germany, let us note such revealing and odd things as bedding hanging out of cottage windows to air—glasses of water served with pots of tea to "trink aftervards"—little girls with horseshoe loaves hung round their necks. And let us try to trace just why that Grimm fairy-tale atmosphere lingers in such old villages as Michelstadt, with its goblin bedecked fountain, its cobbled lanes, and old Rathaus.

Let us discover that one of the loveliest sights is the open air market, where vendors, under enormous coloured umbrellas, array their fruits and vegetables all over the Square. There is one at Darmstadt. The observant director should make a note about level-crossings being made of white scaffold poles from which wires suspend—he should remember that string quartettes play classical music in the streets, and that the hairdresser's sign is a brass plate. That along the banks of the Rhine gleaming automobiles mingle with oxen drawing prehistoric carts, and that all the trees in wayside orchards are numbered, and are let like houses.

CLOSE-UP OF CAFE CHAIRS

Nearer home, Parisian life is symbolised by the café, and the degrees of prosperity in the various neighbourhoods can be ingeniously portrayed by dividing the main film with close ups of café chairs. In the main boulevards they are of immaculate chromium, very modern and expensive looking, but in thoroughfares not quite so fashionable they begin to look tarnished. Later they are wicker. Further out they are made of iron. In the poorest quarters they are dull and shabby, or roughly painted in yellow, but whatever the neighbourhood every corner of the capital has its café, and the quality of the chairs and tables clearly reflects the character of the locality.

Such shots should be employed as "Chapter headings," dividing one section of the film from another, enabling the camera to traverse the entire territory smoothly, linking sequences by the association of one café chair to another. Another simple example of the value of the association of ideas is offered in the Champs Elysées, which possesses a giant statue of Poincaré, standing on a large boulder of rock which

News from Film Societies and Clubs

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY: A performance was given at the David Lewis Theatre, Liverpool, on January 12th, when Sacha Guitry's *Bonne Chance*—"a film concerned with the adventures of a man, a woman and a lottery ticket"—headed the bill. It was supported by *Canal Barge*, a Dutch film directed by Otto van Nevenhoff and M. Franken; Elton's *Housing Problems; The Band Concert* (Mickey Mouse) and *The Birth of the Robot*, Len Lye's Gasparcolor production for Shell. This society is a branch of the British Film Institute—the membership subscription being 2*s.* 6*d.* a year. Performances are strictly limited to members and their friends. The Hon. Secretary is J. Alex Parker, 5/6 Bluecoat Chambers, Liverpool 1.

EAST KENT FILM SOCIETY: Hon. Secretary Miss M. M. Robson, M.A., 133 Northdown Road, Margate. This society was successfully inaugurated on October 25th last year, and since then *The Road to Life*, *En Natt*, *Remous*, *Night Mail* and *Colour Box* have been shown. January programmes included *The King's Stamp*, *Rainbow Dance* (both by G.P.O. Film Unit), René Clair's *Sous Les Toits de Paris*, Stanley Hawes' *Chapter and Verse*, and Pabst's classic, *Kameradschadt*, Anstey's *Enough to Eat?* (formerly titled *The Nutrition Film*), *Landbuilders*, and Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* are scheduled for showing on February 21st. Performances are held at the Cameo Cinema, Cliftonville. Membership has shown a steady increase at each performance.

SCOTTISH CHURCHES FILM GUILD: Though progress has been somewhat hampered by lack of money, membership of this Guild has been increasing steadily, and Lord Tweedsmuir has consented to be Honorary President of the movement. Sir Stephen Bilsland, Bart., The Right Rev. Bishop Reid of Edinburgh, and Sir William E. Whyte are among the Vice Presidents. The membership is being divided into three groups, according to geographical disposition, each group functioning under an Honorary Secretary and arranging for its own programmes and film supplies. The headquarters of the Guild is at Edinburgh, under the chairmanship of Rev. A. H. Dunnett. The address of the Hon. Secretary, John G. Bridges, is 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY: At the performance held on Saturday, January 23rd, the Russian film *Deserter* by Pudovkin, was shown. This film was Pudovkin's first experiment with sound, and its making occupied two years. Much of the film is taken from actual events, such as the Hamburg dock-strike in 1931. Supporting films were *Papageno* and *Cover to Cover*. This society's programmes, which are sent to all Film Societies, contain an article on the art of the film, and comprehensive descriptions of each film shown.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: At the second general meeting on December 12th, 1936, Rev. Ferdinand Valentine pointed out that progress had been made in all three groups, Production, Projection and Mime, and that the society was gradually forming the nucleus of a Central Film Bureau, which by arranging exchange of copyright will help to circulate Catholic sub-standard films throughout the world.

At the same meeting, Rev. Valentine was elected Organising Secretary and Rev. Francis Young, Chairman.

The January display included *Morning Offering*, *Holy Matrimony*, *Aran of the Saints*, *Mount Melleray* and *The Dominicans of Woodchester*. The next display is on February 3rd, at Millicent Fawcett Hall, when a new film entitled *Just for To-day* is to be shown. Tickets, price 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* may be had from the Organising Secretary, 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

LONDON SCHOOLS FILM SOCIETY: A programme of educational films and a demonstration of Kalee projectors were given to the society at the Institute of Education on January 21st. On February 11th, at 6 p.m., a meeting is to be held at the G.P.O. private cinema to see some of the recent films produced by the G.P.O. Film Unit. An address is to be given by one of the leading officers of the Unit. So far as accommodation will permit, the society will be pleased to welcome any who are interested, but application must be made for tickets beforehand to the Hon. Secretary, 50 Ashridge Crescent, S.E.18. On February 18th, at 5.30 p.m., Mr. William Farr, of the British Film Institute, will speak on "Celluloid Text Books" at the Institute of Education. Admission is free, without ticket, to all interested.

THE METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY had the distinction of being the first amateur cine club in Europe to be visited by Senorita Ida Luciana, delegate of the Cine Club of Argentina, who is making a European tour for the purpose of securing an international membership for her club. Glasgow was her first stop on this tour, and she proposes going on to London, Berlin and Rome, with the hope of furthering a free exchange of films and information between the Republic and Europe.

The Senorita's club offers a silver cup for international competition amongst its members, the award being made to the film judged to have the highest artistic merit. Only members are allowed to compete, but films—which should be in the 16 mm. class, and not exceeding four reels—may be sent in from any part of the world.

The club's headquarters are in Buenos Aires, and it is as well to warn intending competitors that the Argentines take their films very seriously, and delight to compete with professional newsreel operators in securing local interest features.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY: The programme given at the Rivoli Cinema, Rusholme, on January 17th, was headed by *The Deserter*. This film—Pudovkin's first talkie—is a tragedy of class struggle, unemployment and economic crisis, followed by new leadership, new ideals and new generations—a film of penetrating satire by an inspired director. It was supported by two French films—*L'Hippocampe*, a study of sea-horses, and *The Pacific Problem*, a film of Japanese expansion in the Far East. *Hey Rup* is to be the feature film of the next show of the society on February 14th, and *Chapter and Verse* has been booked for the following month. All applications for membership should be made to The Secretary, 86 Hulton Street, Salford, 5. The subscription is 10*s.* a year.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: *Raspoutine*, the classical German film of the strange personality who controlled Russia's destiny in the period before the Revolution, was the chief feature of a programme given on Sunday, January 24th, which also included Anstey's *Dinner Hour*, for the British Commercial Gas Association, *The March of Time*, Fischinger's *Lichtertanz*, and Robert Fairthorne's new mathematical notation for differential calculus, *The Equation* $X + X = O$. On the same day Dr. F. D. Klingender gave a lecture on *Social Backgrounds to American and Russian Films*.

Membership fee for the half season 1936–37 has been reduced to 6*s.* 6*d.* inclusive. This entitles members to one seat at the remaining three monthly performances and film lectures. Members may bring up to four guests to performances, and applications for guest tickets should be made to the Hon. Secretary, 8 King's Road, N.4.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD: In an attempt to give a lead to producers, members of the Film Guild have been invited to submit suggestions for (*a*) one-reel or two-reel documentary films, and (*b*) feature-length entertainment films, suitable for presentation at the Scottish Empire Exhibition in 1938. Two prizes of a year's subscription to the WORLD FILM NEWS will be given for the best suggestions in each class.

The programme given on January 10th at the Caley Picture House, included *The Red Army* (G.-B. Instructional), *Soap Bubbles*, Len Lye's *Birth of the Robot*, and Pudovkin's *Deserter*. A discussion at the Caledonian Hotel followed the show. Jean Vigo's *L'Atalante*, which contains "probably the finest things the cinema has yet given us," was shown on January 31st. Hon. Secretary: Douglas A. Donald, 16 Great King Street, Edinburgh, 3.

NOTE: All Film Society and Club News should reach W.F.N. not later than the 10th of each month.

Filming a Foreign Town—(contd.)

was transported from the Forest of Fontainbleu. A close up of that boulder would cut neatly to a similar close up of one of the hundreds of rocks lying in the Forest, thus enabling the camera to leave Paris and continue its pilgrimage in Fontainebleu without a break or a jolt.

In Brussels there always seems to be a quantity of very large and fashionable ladies, and the reason may be due to the equally large number of Patissiers, famous for enormous and ultra-sweet cakes. Stout, hardy women with men's voices sell newspapers, which are strapped to their waists. Anyone sits anywhere in Brussels—it is friendly and honest. Cafés are sprinkled with children drinking cocoa, and priests drinking wine—the white metal helmets of the police, and the English-looking shopfronts are worth a few shots, intermingled with some close ups of lace. It is by these little, and, at first sight, unimportant incidents and objects that the true underlying character of places is built up, and I strongly advise the amateur to scour a locality for material, noting everything before attempting to shoot.

HUMAN INTEREST

When he has definitely created what may be termed an impressionistic prologue, he is justified in beginning leisurely surveys of all the usual sights. But his main duty is to reveal the fact that each place he visits is inhabited by human beings, who, with past generations, have made the city what it is, and consequently, by firstly showing the creators of a place, the complete picture which follows, portraying the results of their labour, will be more easily understood and remembered, and what is of even greater importance, the true spirit of the locality, which hovers over everything and everybody, will be actually felt by the audience at home.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppets in Gaspar-color).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION; Slatinay, George Pal

BIRKENHEAD: The Empire	Feb. 15, 6 days
BRISTOL: Gaiety	Feb. 8, 3 days
CARLISLE: Palace	Feb. 22, 6 days
DARLINGTON: Empire	Feb. 15, 6 days
DUMBARTON: Picture House	Feb. 22, 3 days
LONDON: Imperial, Edgware Rd.	Feb. 1, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Manor	Feb. 18, 3 days
Scala	Feb. 4, 3 days

And So to Work (A comedy of early morning rising).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Richard Massingham

BARNSTAPLE: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 25, 3 days
BATH: News Theatre	Feb. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Curzon, Old Swan	Feb. 4, 3 days
Gaumont Palace	Feb. 4, 3 days
LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	Feb. 15, 7 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Feb. 14, 4 days
SOUTHAMPTON: Regal	Feb. 7, 7 days

Beat the Retreat (Dunning colour cartoon).
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
DRAWN BY: Anson Dyer
RECITATION: Stanley Holloway

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	Feb. 22, 6 days

Beside the Seaside (Documentary of South Coast resorts).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

GLASGOW: New Parade, Dennistoun	Feb. 8, 6 days
GREENOCK: B.B. Cinema	Feb. 18, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Balfour, Darnall	Feb. 25, 3 days
SOUTHEND: Kursaal	Feb. 22, 3 days
UPPINGHAM: Rutland Cinema	Feb. 3, 4 days

Cable Ship. (Documentary of the G.P.O. Cable Ships at work in the Channel).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Stuart Legg

BLACKPOOL: King Edward	Feb. 7, 7 days
LEEDS: Imperial	Feb. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Grand	Feb. 24, 2 days

Cavalcade of the Movies (in six chapters).
DISTRIBUTION: Butcher's

LONDON: Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	
Chapter 1	Feb. 8, 6 days
Chapter 2	Feb. 15, 6 days
Chapter 3	Feb. 22, 6 days

Coalface (Poetic treatment of coal-mining).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Film Unit
SOUND DIRECTION: Cavalcanti

BLACKPOOL: King Edward	Feb. 7, 4 days
CHEADLE HULME: Elysian	Feb. 22, 3 days
GATESHEAD: Bensham	Feb. 18, 3 days
KILMARNOCK: Ayr Film Society	Feb. 14, 1 day
LEEDS: Imperial	Feb. 25, 3 days
MARKET DRAYTON: Town Hall	Feb. 22, 3 days
NEWCASTLE: New Cinema	Feb. 15, 3 days

Cover to Cover (A documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

ALDERSHOT: Empire	Feb. 14, 7 days
BARNSLEY: Empire	Feb. 1, 6 days
COLCHESTER: Empire	Feb. 1, 6 days
DONCASTER: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 15, 6 days
DUMBARTON: Picture House	Feb. 1, 3 days

Cover to Cover—*continued.*

HULL: Regal	Feb. 1, 6 days
LEEDS: Majestic	Feb. 8, 6 days
LONDON: Kensington	Feb. 15, 6 days
MONMOUTH: Picture House	Feb. 4, 3 days
NORTH SHEILDS: Princes	Feb. 8, 6 days
READING: Pavilion	Feb. 15, 6 days
SOUTHEND: Astoria	Feb. 21, 7 days
SUNDERLAND: Plaza	Feb. 25, 3 days
WEYBRIDGE: County	Feb. 4, 3 days
WINCHESTER: Royal	Feb. 22, 3 days

Dragon of Wales (A travelogue which attempts to tackle economic problems).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard

NEWARK: Kinema	Feb. 15, 3 days
MOTHERWELL: La Scala	Feb. 18, 3 days

Fire Fighters (Film of the London Fire Brigade).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Colin

BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Feb. 1, 6 days
BRIGHTON: Academy	Feb. 7, 7 days
GLASGOW: Granada, Parkhead	Feb. 22, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Ritz, Anfield	Feb. 8, 3 days
Smithdown Picture Play-house	Feb. 8, 3 days
ROCHDALE: Hippodrome	Feb. 1, 6 days
SHEFFIELD: Crookes Picture Palace	Feb. 25, 3 days
Lansdowne	Feb. 8, 3 days
Palace, Tinsley	Feb. 25, 3 days
Palace, Wincobank	Feb. 25, 3 days
Sunbeam Picture Palace	Feb. 11, 3 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (Historical Survey of European affairs for the past 40 years).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: A.B. Svensk Filmindustri
ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor

MATLOCK: Cinema House	Feb. 1, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Jesmond Picture House	Feb. 18, 3 days
News Theatre	Feb. 1, 6 days
OXFORD: Scala (Film Society)	Feb. 7, 1 day
POTTERS BAR: Ritz	Feb. 25, 3 days
PUDSEY: Picture House	Feb. 15, 3 days

Happy Hampstead (North London's playground in many moods).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: R. B. Pearce

REDDITCH: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 18, 3 days

Islands of the Bounty (Islands associated with the famous mutiny).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

CLYDEBANK: Palace	Feb. 18, 3 days
KILMARNOCK: Regal	Feb. 18, 3 days
LEATHERHEAD: Picturehouse	Feb. 11, 3 days
MACCLESFIELD: Majestic	Feb. 15, 6 days
MOTHERWELL: La Scala	Feb. 4, 3 days
PRESTON: Theatre Royal	Feb. 22, 6 days
ST. HELEN'S: Savoy	Feb. 15, 3 days
WALTON: Astoria	Feb. 11, 3 days
WIGAN: Princes	Feb. 22, 6 days

Key to Scotland (Documentary of Edinburgh).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

EDINBURGH: Lyceum	Feb. 8, 6 days
Ritz	Feb. 8, 6 days
GLASGOW: Kings	Feb. 25, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Empress	Feb. 4, 3 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross	Feb. 15, 3 days
News Theatre, Victoria	Feb. 25, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	Feb. 4, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Feb. 25, 3 days
REDDITCH: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 15, 3 days
STIRLING: Regal	Feb. 25, 3 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Feb. 25, 3 days
ECCLES: Broadway	Feb. 22, 3 days
ELY: Majestic	Feb. 4, 3 days
GRANTHAM: Empire	Feb. 4, 3 days
HULL: Savoy	Feb. 22, 3 days
OAKHAM: Regal	Feb. 8, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Palace, Tinsley	Feb. 11, 3 days
Palace, Wincobank	Feb. 11, 3 days
Unity Picture Palace	Feb. 1, 3 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the northward trip of the Postal Special).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Basil Wright and Harry Watt for G.P.O. Film Unit.

BELFAST: Ambassadors	Feb. 15, 3 days
Lyric	Feb. 1, 6 days
CARLISLE: Palace	Feb. 22, 6 days
FOWEY: Cinema	Feb. 4, 3 days
MANCHESTER: College Tech.	Feb. 9, 1 day
MARKET DRAYTON: Town Hall	Feb. 4, 3 days
PETERSFIRLD: Savoy	Feb. 25, 3 days
SALE: Savoy	Feb. 4, 6 days

Rainbow Dance (Colour fantasy).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Len Lye

OXFORD: Scala	Feb. 1, 6 days

Secret Hiding Places (Priest holes to be found in English country houses).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers

BATH: News Theatre	Feb. 8, 3 days
BIRKENHEAD: Plaza	Feb. 18, 3 days
BIRMINGHAM: Odeon, Warley	Feb. 15, 6 days
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace	Feb. 15, 6 days
CHICHESTER: Plaza	Feb. 8, 6 days
DERBY: Odeon	Feb. 22, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Bedford	Feb. 15, 3 days
LONDON: News Theatre, Victoria	Feb. 15, 3 day
Studio Two, Oxford St.	Feb. 25, 3 days
Tatler, Charing Cross Rd.	Feb. 1, 6 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Feb. 18, 3 days
WEYBRIDGE: County	Feb. 22, 6 days

Shorts (*cont.*)

"Secrets of Life" Series (Imaginative description of natural processes).
DISTRIBUTION: G.-B.D.
PRODUCTION: Mary Field for G.-B.I.
TECHNICAL SUPERVISION: Percy Smith

Baby on the Rocks
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross — Feb. 25, 3 days

Butterflies and Beetles
GLASGOW: Mecca — Feb. 3, 2 days

He Would A-Wooing Go
LONDON: Monseigneur, Charing Cross — Feb. 15, 3 days

Queer Diet
BUCKINGHAM: Chandos — Feb. 22, 3 days

Thistledown
LONDON: Monseigneur, Leicester Sq. — Feb. 1, 3 days

Wake Up and Feed
DUNDEE: Forest Park — Feb. 28, 3 days

Seventh Day (How London spends its Sunday).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: A. P. Barralet
CHESTER: Tatler — Feb. 1, 6 days

Six-thirty Collection (Documentary of West-End Sorting Office).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Edgar Anstey, Harry Watt
LEEDS: Cosy — Feb. 4, 3 days
PWLLHELI: Town Hall — Feb. 18, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Chantry — Feb. 25, 3 days

Song of Ceylon (Documentary).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit
DIRECTION: Basil Wright
PORTSMOUTH: News Theatre — Feb. 7, 4 days

Under the Water (French documentary with submarine photography).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Marcel de Hubsch
ENGLISH COMMENTARY: Alan Howland
ABERDEEN: Palace — Feb. 8, 6 days
CARLISLE: Lonsdale — Feb. 22, 6 days
GRAVESEND: Majestic — Feb. 21, 7 days
HULL: Rex — Feb. 8, 3 days
LONDON: Electric Palace, Highgate — Feb. 22, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Savoy, Sale — Feb. 1, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: News Theatre — Feb. 1, 3 days

Weather Forecast (The gathering of information for official forecasts).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson
DIRECTION: Evelyn Spice
CLIFTONVILLE: Cameo Film Society — Feb. 21, 1 day
DARTMOUTH: Royal Naval College — Feb. 20, 1 day
HUDDERSFIELD: Savoy — Feb. 25, 3 days
MIDDLETON: Savoy — Feb. 15, 3 days

Advertising Film

On Parade (Puppet film in colour).
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor for Horlick's Malted Milk Co.
DIRECTION: George Pal
AYLESBURY: Pavilion — Feb. 1, 6 days
LONDON: Blue Hall, Edgware Road — Feb. 1, 6 days
PORTSMOUTH: Troxy Theatre, Fratton Park — Feb. 6, 6 days
STAINES: New Empire — Feb. 1, 6 days

Foreign Films

Der Ammenkoenig (The banned German comedy).
LONDON: Studio One, Oxford Street — Following *La Kermesse Heroïque*

Ernte ("Harvest"—German).
DIRECTOR: Geza von Bolvary
STARRING: Paula Wessely
LONDON: Academy, Oxford Street — Feb 1, indefinitely

Merlusse (French school drama).
PRODUCTION: Les films Marcel Pagnol
STARRING: Henri Poupon
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 15, 6 days

Old and Young King (German film of Frederick I of Prussia and his son).
DISTRIBUTION: Tobis
DIRECTION: Hans Steinhoff
STARRING: Emil Jannings
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 18, 6 days

Regine (Drama of a German engineer).
DISTRIBUTION: Tobis
PRODUCTION: Erich Waschneck
DIRECTION: Hermann Orund
STARRING: Adolf Wohlbruck, Luise Ullrick
LONDON: Forum, Villiers Street — Feb. 1, indefinitely

Remous (French sex problem drama).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville
STARRING: Jean Galland, Jeanne Boitel
CAMBRIDGE: Rendezvous — Feb. 22, 6 days

Savoy Hotel 217 (German).
DISTRIBUTION: Ufa
DIRECTION: Gustav Ucicky
STARRING: Hans Albers
OXFORD: Scala (Film Society) — Feb. 7, 1 day

The Student of Prague (Austrian sound version of the famous silent film).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Arthur Robison
STARRING: Adolph Wohlbruck, Dorothea Wieck
GLASGOW: Salon — Feb. 15, 3 days

Unfinished Symphony (Original German version).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Willi Forst
STARRING: Hans Jaray, Marta Eggerth
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 15, 3 days

Veille d'Armes (French Naval melodrama).
STARRING: Annabella
OXFORD: Scala — Feb. 1, 6 days

Feature Films for February Release

As You Like it (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Paul Czinner
STARRING: Elisabeth Bergner, Laurence Olivier, Sophie Stewart, Henry Ainley, Leon Quartermaine

Dodsworth (United Artists)
DIRECTOR William Wyler
STARRING: Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, Mary Astor

Gorgeous Hussy, The (M.-G.-M.)
DIRECTOR: Clarence Brown
STARRING: Lionel Barrymore, Joan Crawford, Robert Taylor

His Lordship (Gaumont-British)
DIRECTOR: Herbert Mason
STARRING: George Arliss, Romilly Lunge, Rene Ray

Man Who Could Work Miracles, The (London Films)
DIRECTOR: Lothar Mendes
STARRING: Roland Young, Joan Gardner

My Man Godfrey (Universal)
DIRECTOR: Gregory La Cava
STARRING: William Powell, Carole Lombard

Road to Glory (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Howard Hawks
STARRING: Fredric March, Warner Baxter, Lionel Barrymore, June Lang, Gregory Ratoff

Sabotage (Gaumont-British)
DIRECTOR: Alfred Hitchcock
STARRING: Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, John Loder, Desmond Tester

Sing, Baby, Sing (20th Century-Fox)
DIRECTOR: Sidney Lanfield
STARRING: Alice Faye, Adolphe Menjou, Gregory Ratoff, Ted Healey, Patsy Kelly, The Ritz Brothers

Texas Rangers, The (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: King Vidor
STARRING: Fred MacMurray, Jack Oakie, Jean Parker

Three on the Trail (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Howard Bretherton
STARRING: William Boyd, Muriel Evans

A.R.F.P.

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